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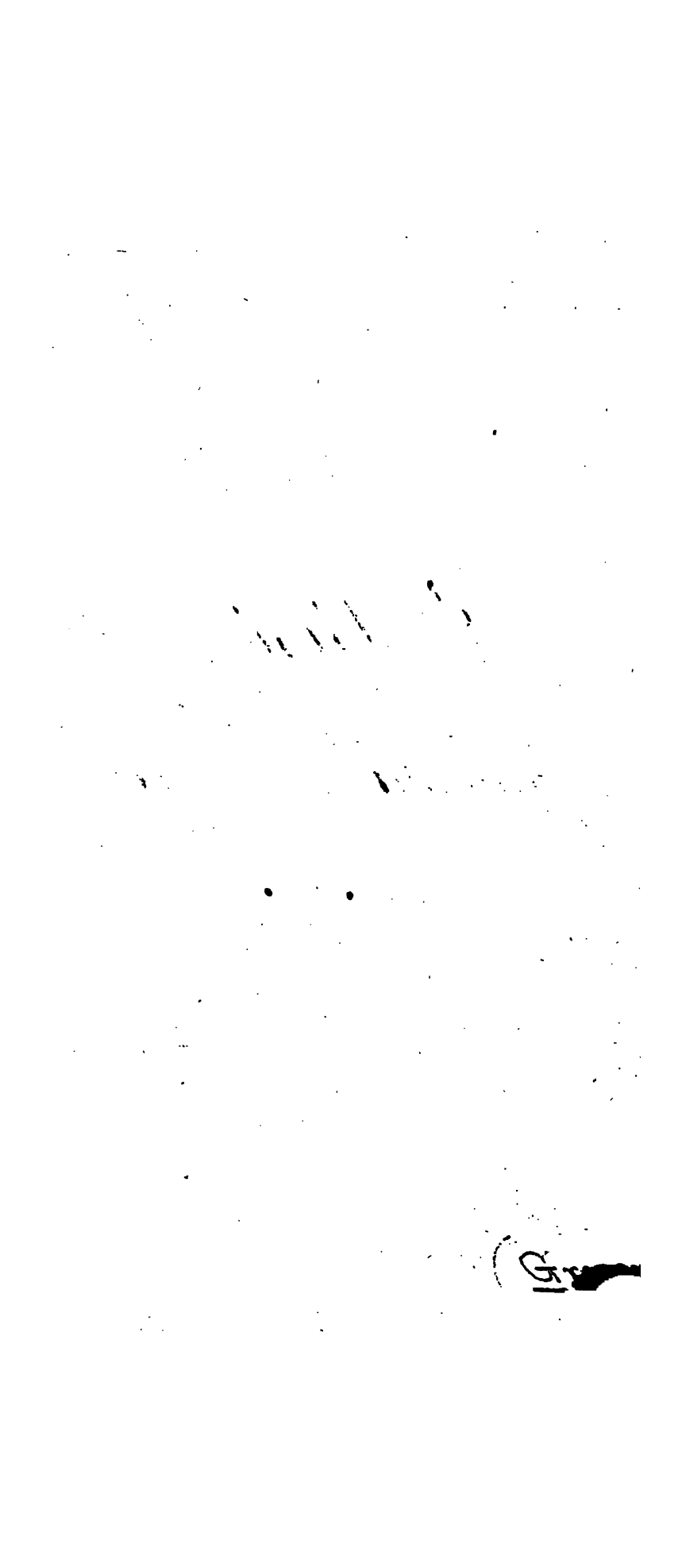

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M.D.

A

COMPARATIVE VIEW

OF THE

STATE AND FACULTIES

OF

MAN, &c. &c.

A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE STATE AND FACULTIES OF MAN WITH THOSE OF THE ANIMAL WORLD.

By JOHN GREGORY, M.D. F.R.S.
Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, and First Physician to His Majesty in Scotland.

A NEW EDITION.

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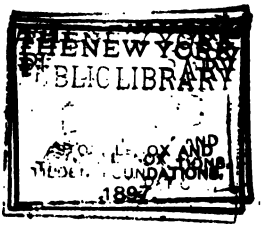
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PREFACE.

BY *an advertiſement prefixed to the firſt edition of this book, the public was informed that it conſiſted of ſome diſcourſes originally read in a private literary ſociety, without the moſt diſtant view to their publication. The looſe and careleſs manner in which they are written, is too ſtrong an internal evidence that they never were intended for the public inſpection. But, for what purpoſe they were originally compoſed, and how they came into the world, are queſtions which a reader will never aſk: he has an undoubted right to cenſure them with all the ſeverity which their faults deſerve, and to cenſure likewiſe the author*

of

of them, unleſs he could pretend they were publiſhed without his knowledge. The unexpected favor he has met with from the public has encouraged him to correct and enlarge this edition; but when he attempted to treat his ſubject with that fullneſs and accuracy which its importance required, he found it run into ſo great an extent, that he was obliged to abandon it, being neceſſarily engaged in buſineſs and ſtudies of a very different nature. He would gladly have ſuppreſſed ſome ſentiments careleſsly thrown out in the confidence of private friendſhip, which may be liable to miſconſtruction; but he was afraid that, by too anxious an attention to guard againſt every objection, he ſhould deprive the book of that appearance of eaſe and freedom in which its only merit conſiſted. When we unboſom ourſelves to

our

our friends on a ſubject that intereſts us, there is ſometimes a glow of ſentiment and warmth of expreſſion that pleaſes, though it conveys nothing particularly ingenious or original.

The title of the book does not well expreſs its contents. The public is too well accuſtomed to books that have not much correſpondence with their titles, to be ſurprized at this. But it would have been an impoſition of a worſe kind to have changed the title in this new edition. The truth is, the ſubjects here treated, are ſo different, that it was impoſſible to find any title, that could fully comprehend them. Yet unconnected as they ſeem to be, there was a certain train of ideas that led to them, which it may not be improper to explain.

When we attend to the many advan-

tages which Mankind poſſeſs above the inferior Animals, it is natural to enquire into the uſe we make of thoſe advantages. This leads to the conſideration of Man in his ſavage ſtate, and through the progreſſive ſtages of human ſociety.

Man in his ſavage ſtate is, in ſome reſpects, in a worſe condition than any other animal. He has indeed ſuperior faculties, but as he does not poſſeſs, in ſo great a degree as other animals, the internal principle of inſtinct to direct theſe faculties to his greateſt good, they are often perverted in ſuch a manner as to render him more unhappy. He poſſeſſes bodily ſtrength, agility, health, and what are called the animal faculties, in greater perfection, than Men in the more advanced ſtates of ſociety; but the nobler and more

diſtinguiſhing

diſtinguiſhing principles of human Nature lie in a great meaſure dormant. Like a beaſt of prey he paſſes his time generally in queſt of food, or in ſupine ſloth. He often diſplays the inſtinctive courage of a Tyger or the cunning of a Fox, though ſeldom tempered with that ſpirit of equity, generoſity, and forgiveneſs, which alone renders Courage a virtue.

There is a certain period in the progreſs of ſociety, in which Mankind appear to the greateſt advantage. In this period they poſſeſs the bodily powers and all the animal functions in their full vigour. They are bold, active, ſteady, ardent in the love of liberty and their native country. Their manners are ſimple, their ſocial affections warm, and though they are much influenced by the ties of blood, yet they are

*generous and hoſpitable to ſtrangers. Religion is univerſally regarded among them, though diſguiſed by a variety of ſuperſtitions. This ſtate * of ſociety, in which Nature ſhoots wild and free, encourages the high exertions of fancy and paſſion, and is therefore peculiarly favourable to the arts depending on theſe; but for the ſame cauſe it checks the progreſs of the rational powers, which require coolneſs, accuracy, and an imagination perfectly ſubdued and under the controul of reaſon. The wants of Nature, likewiſe, being few, and eaſily ſupplied, require but little of the aſſiſtance of ingenuity; though what moſt effectually retards the progreſs of knowledge among ſuch a people, is the difficulty of communicating and tranſmitting it from one perſon to another.*

* Dr. Blair.

A very

A very beautiful picture of this ſtate of ſociety is exhibited in the works of Oſſian. There we meet with Men poſſeſſing that high ſpirit of independence, that elevation and dignity of ſoul, that contempt of death, that attachment to their friends and to their country, which has rendered the memory of the Greek and Roman Heroes immortal. But where ſhall we find their equals in ancient or modern ſtory, among the moſt ſavage or the moſt poliſhed nations, in thoſe gentler virtues of the heart, that accompanied and tempered their heroiſm? There we ſee diſplayed the higheſt martial ſpirit, exerted only in the defence of their friends and of their country. We ſee there dignity without oſtentation, courage without ferocity, and ſenſibility without weakneſs. Poſſeſſed of every ſenti-

ment of juſtice and humanity, this ſingular people never took thoſe advantages, which their ſuperior valour, or the fortune of war gave them over their enemies. Inſtead of maſſacring their priſoners in cold blood, they treated them with kindneſs and hoſpitality; they gave them the feaſt of ſhells, and, with a delicacy that would do honour to any age, endeavoured, by every art, to ſooth the ſenſe of their misfortunes, and generouſly reſtored them to their freedom. If an enemy fell in battle, his body was not inſulted, nor dragged at the chariot-wheels of the conqueror. He received the laſt honours of the warrior. The ſong of Bards aroſe. Theſe ſons of liberty were too juſt to encroach on the rights of their neighbours, and had magnanimity enough to protect the

the feeble and defenceleſs, inſtead of oppreſſing and enſlaving them. As they required no ſlaves to do the laborious and ſervile offices of life, they were ſtill leſs diſpoſed to degrade their Women to ſo mean and ſo wretched a ſituation. How humane, how noble does this conduct appear, when compared with the ungenerous treatment which women meet with among all barbarous nations, and which they ſometimes have met with among people who have been always diſplayed to the world as patterns of wiſdom and virtue! There they have been condemned to the moſt miſerable ſlavery, in offices unſuitable to the delicacy of their conſtitutions, diſproportionate to their ſtrength, and which muſt have totally extinguiſhed the native chearfulneſs of their ſpirits. Thus have

Men inverted the order of Nature, and taken a mean and illiberal advantage of that weakneſs, of which they were the natural guardians, in order to indulge the moſt deſpicable ſloth, or to feed a ſtupid pride, which diſdained thoſe employments that Nature has made neceſſary for the ſubſiſtence and comfort of Human Life; and by this means have deſervedly cut themſelves off from the principal pleaſures of ſocial and domeſtic life. The Women deſcribed by Oſſian, have a character as ſingular as that of his Heroes. They poſſeſs the high ſpirit and dignity of Roman Matrons, united to all the ſoftneſs and delicacy ever painted in modern Romance. The hiſtory of theſe people ſeems to be juſtly referred to a period, much farther diſtant than that of chivalry; and though

though we make the largeſt allowance for the painting of a ſublime poetic Genius, yet we muſt ſuppoſe, that the manners and ſentiments he deſcribes had their foundation in real life, as much as thoſe deſcribed by Homer. A Poet may heighten the features and colouring of his ſubject, but if he deſerts Nature, if he deſcribes ſentiments and manners unknown to his readers, and which their hearts do not recognize, it is certain he can neither be admired nor underſtood. The exiſtence of ſuch a People, in ſuch an age and country, and of ſuch a Poet to deſcribe them, is one of the moſt extraordinary events in the hiſtory of mankind, and well deſerving the attention of both philoſophers and critics, eſpecially ſince this is perhaps the only period where it is not only poſſible but eaſy to aſcertain or

diſprove the reality of the fact, of which ſome people pretend ſtill to doubt.—But I return to our ſubject.

Such a ſtate of ſociety as I was before deſcribing, ſeldom laſts long. The power neceſſarily lodged in the hands of a few, for the purpoſes of public ſafety and utility, is ſoon abuſed. Ambition and all its direful conſequences ſucceed. As the human faculties expand themſelves, new inlets of gratification are diſcovered. The intercourſe in particular with other nations brings an acceſſion of new pleaſures, and conſequently of new wants. The advantages attending an intercourſe and commerce with foreign nations are, at firſt view, very ſpecious and attracting. By theſe means the peculiar advantages of one climate are, in ſome degree, communicated

to

to another; a free and ſocial intercourſe is promoted among Mankind; knowledge is enlarged, and prejudices are removed. On the other hand, it may be ſaid, that every country, by the help of induſtry, produces whatever is neceſſary to its own inhabitants; that the neceſſities of Nature are eaſily gratified, but the cravings of falſe appetite, and a deluded imagination, are endleſs and inſatiable; that when Men leave the plain road of Nature, ſuperior knowledge and ingenuity, inſtead of combating a vitiated taſte and inflamed paſſions, are employed to juſtify and indulge them; that the purſuits of commerce are deſtructive of the health and lives of the human ſpecies, and that this deſtruction falls principally upon thoſe who are moſt diſtinguiſhed for their activity, ſpirit, and capacity.

But

But one of the moſt certain conſequences of a very extended commerce, and of what is called the moſt advanced and poliſhed ſtate of ſociety, is an univerſal paſſion for riches, which corrupts every ſentiment of Taſte, Nature, and Virtue. This at length reduces human Nature to the moſt unhappy ſtate in which it can ever be beheld. The conſtitution both of body and mind becomes ſickly and feeble, unable to ſuſtain the common viciſſitudes of life without ſinking under them, and equally unable to enjoy its natural pleaſures, becauſe the ſources of them are cut off or perverted. In this ſtate money becomes the univerſal idol to which every knee bows, to which every principle of Virtue and Religion yields, and to which the health and lives of the greater part of the ſpecies are every day ſacrificed. So totally does this

paſſion

paſſion pervert the human heart, that it extinguiſhes or conquers the natural attachment between the ſexes, and in defiance of every ſentiment of Nature and ſound policy, makes people look even upon their own children as an incumbrance and oppreſſion. Neither does money, in exchange for all this, procure happineſs, or even pleaſure in the limited ſenſe of the word; it yields only food for a reſtleſs, anxious, inſatiable vanity, and abandons Men to diſſipation, langour, diſguſt and miſery. In this ſituation, patriotiſm is not only extinguiſhed, but, the very pretenſion to it is treated with ridicule: What are called public views, do not regard the encouragement of population, the promoting of virtue, or the ſecurity of liberty; they regard only the enlargement of commerce and the extenſion of conqueſt.

queſt. When a nation arrives at this pitch of depravity, its duration as a free ſtate muſt be very ſhort, and can only be protracted by the accidental circumſtances of the neighbouring nations being equally corrupted, or of different diſeaſes in the ſtate balancing and counter-acting one another. But when once a free, an opulent and luxurious people, loſe their liberty, they become of all ſlaves the vileſt and moſt miſerable.

We ſhall readily acknowledge, at the ſame time, that in a very advanced and poliſhed ſtate of ſociety, human Nature appears in many reſpects to great advantage. The numerous wants which luxury creates, give exerciſe to the powers of invention in order to ſatisfy them. This encourages many of the elegant arts, and in the progreſs of

theſe, ſome natural principles of taſte, which in more ſimple ages lay latent in the human Mind, are awakened, and become proper and innocent ſources of pleaſure. The underſtanding likewiſe, when it begins to feel its own powers, expands itſelf, and puſhes its enquiries into Nature with a ſucceſs incredible to more ignorant nations. This ſtate of ſociety is equally favourable to the external appearance of manners, which it renders humane, gentle and polite. It is true, that theſe improvements are often ſo perverted, that they bring no acceſſion of happineſs to Mankind. In matters of taſte, the great, the ſublime, the pathetic, are firſt brought to yield to regularity and elegance; and at length are ſacrificed to the moſt childiſh paſſion for novelty and the moſt extravagant caprice. The enlarged powers

of

of underſtanding, inſtead of being applied to the uſeful arts of life, are diſſipated upon trifles, or waſted upon impotent attempts to graſp at ſubjects above their reach; and politeneſs of manners comes to be the cloak of diſſimulation. Yet ſtill thoſe abuſes ſeem in ſome meaſure to be only accidental.

It was this conſideration of Mankind in the progreſſive ſtages of ſociety, that led to the idea, perhaps a very romantic one, of uniting together the peculiar advantages of theſe ſeveral ſtages, and cultivating them in ſuch a manner as to render human life more comfortable and happy. However impoſſible it may be to realize this idea in large ſocieties of Men, it is ſurely practicable among individuals. A perſon without loſing any one ſubſtantial pleaſure that is to be found in the moſt advanced ſtate of ſociety,

but

but on the contrary in a greater capacity to reliſh them all, may enjoy perfect vigour of health and ſpirits; he may have the moſt enlarged underſtanding, and apply it to the moſt uſeful purpoſes; he may poſſeſs all the principles of genuine Taſte, and preſerve them in their proper ſubordination; he may poſſeſs delicacy of ſentiment and ſenſibility of heart, without being a ſlave to falſe refinement or caprice. Simplicity may be united with elegance of manners; a humane and gentle temper may be found conſiſtent with the moſt ſteady and reſolute ſpirit, and religion may be revered without bigotry or enthuſiaſm.

Such was the general train of ſentiments that gave riſe to the following Treatiſe. But the reader will find it proſecuted in a very imperfect and deſultory manner. When

it

it was firſt compoſed, the author thought himſelf at liberty to throw out his ideas without much regard to method or arrangement, and to enlarge more or leſs on particular parts of his ſubject, not in proportion to their importance, but as fancy at the time dictated. He would with pleaſure have attempted to rectify theſe imperfections, which he has reaſon to be aſhamed of in a work offered to the public; but the circumſtances which he formerly mentioned put that entirely out of his power.

SECTION

SECTION I.

HUMAN Nature has been conſidered in very different and oppoſite lights. Some have painted it in a moſt amiable form, and carefully ſhaded every weakneſs and deformity. They have repreſented vice as foreign and unnatural to the Human Mind, and have maintained that what paſſes under that name is, in general, only an exuberance of virtuous diſpoſitions, or good affections improperly directed, but never proceeds from any inherent malignity or depravity of the heart itſelf.—The Human Underſtanding has

been thought capable of penetrating into the deepeſt receſſes of nature, of imitating her works, and, in ſome caſes, of acquiring a ſuperiority over them.

Such views are generally embraced by thoſe who have good hearts and happy tempers, who are beginning the world, and are not yet hackney'd in the ways of Men, by thoſe who love ſcience and have an ambition to excel in it; and they have an obvious tendency to raiſe the genius and mend the heart, but are the ſource of frequent and cruel diſappointments.—

Others have repreſented Human Nature as a ſink of depravity and wretchedneſs, have ſuppoſed this its natural ſtate, and the unavoidable lot of humanity: They have repreſented the Human Underſtanding as weak and ſhort-ſighted, the Human Power as extremely feeble and limited, and have treated

treated all attempts to enlarge them as vain and chimerical.—Such repreſentations are greedily adopted by Men of narrow and contracted hearts, and of very limited genius, who feel within themſelves the juſtneſs of the deſcription. It muſt be owned, however, that they are often agreeable and ſoothing to Men of excellent and warm affections, but of too great ſenſibility of ſpirit, whoſe tempers have been hurt by frequent and unmerited diſappointments.

A bad opinion of Human Nature readily produces a ſelfiſh diſpoſition, and renders the temper cheerleſs and unſociable; a mean opinion of our intellectual faculties depreſſes the genius, as it cuts off all proſpect of attaining a much greater degree of knowledge than is poſſeſt at preſent, and of carrying into execution any grand and extenſive plans of improvement.

It is not propoſed to inſiſt further on the ſeveral advantages and diſadvantages of theſe oppoſite views of Human Nature, and on their influence in forming a character. — Perhaps that View may be the ſafeſt, which conſiders it as formed for every thing that is good and great, which ſets no bounds to its capacities and powers, but looks on its preſent attainments as trifling and inconſiderable.

Enquiries into Human Nature, tho' of the laſt importance, have been proſecuted with little care and leſs ſucceſs. This has been owing partly to the general cauſes which have obſtructed the progreſs of the other branches of knowledge, and partly to the peculiar difficulties of the ſubject. Enquiries into the ſtructure of the Human Body have indeed been proſecuted with great diligence and accuracy. But this was

a matter

a matter of no great difficulty. It required only labour and a ſteady hand. The ſubject was permanent; the Anatomiſt could fix it in any poſition, and make what experiments on it he pleaſed.

The Human Mind, on the other hand, is an object extremely fleeting, not the ſame in any two individuals, and ever varying even in the ſame perſon. To trace it thro' its almoſt endleſs varieties, requires the moſt profound and extenſive knowledge, and the moſt piercing and collected genius. But tho' it be a matter of great difficulty to inveſtigate and aſcertain the laws of the mental conſtitution, yet there is no reaſon to doubt, however fluctuating it may ſeem, of its being governed by laws as fixt and invariable as thoſe of the Material Syſtem.

It has been the misfortune of moſt

of thoſe who have ſtudy'd the philoſophy of the Human Mind, that they have been little acquainted with the ſtructure of the Human Body, and with the laws of the Animal Œconomy; and yet the Mind and Body are ſo intimately connected, and have ſuch a mutual influence on one another, that the conſtitution of either, examined apart, can never be thoroughly underſtood. For the ſame reaſon it has been an unſpeakable loſs to Phyſicians, that they have been ſo generally inattentive to the peculiar laws of the Mind, and to their influence on the Body. A late celebrated profeſſor of Medicine in a neighbouring nation, who perhaps had rather a clear and methodical head, than an extenſive genius or enlarged views of Nature, wrote a Syſtem of Phyſic, wherein he ſeems to have conſidered Man entirely as a Machine, and makes

a feeble and vain attempt to explain all the Phænomena of the Animal Œconomy, by mechanical and chymical principles alone. Stahl, his cotemporary and rival, who had a more enlarged genius, and penetrated more deeply into Nature, added the conſideration of the ſentient principle, and united the philoſophy of the Human Mind with that of the Human Body: but the luxuriancy of his imagination often bewildered him, and the perplexity and obſcurity of his ſtyle occaſion his writings to be little read and leſs underſtood.

Beſides theſe, there is another cauſe which renders the knowledge of Human Nature very lame and imperfect, which we propoſe more particularly to enquire into.

Man has been uſually conſidered as a Being that had no analogy to the reſt of

the Animal Creation. The comparative anatomy of brute Animals hath indeed been cultivated with ſome attention; and hath been the ſource of the moſt uſeful diſcoveries in the anatomy of the Human Body: But the comparative Animal Œconomy of Mankind and other Animals, and comparative Views of their ſtates and manner of life, have been little regarded. The pride of Man is alarmed, in this caſe, with too cloſe a compariſon, and the dignity of philoſophy will not eaſily ſtoop to receive a leſſon from the inſtinct of Brutes. But this conduct is very weak and fooliſh. Nature is a whole, made up of parts, which though diſtinct, are yet intimately connected with one another. This connection is ſo cloſe, that one ſpecies often runs into another ſo imperceptibly, that it is difficult to ſay where the one begins and the other ends. This is particularly the caſe with

with the loweſt of one ſpecies, and the higheſt of that immediately below it. On this account no one link of the great chain can be perfectly underſtood, without the knowledge, at leaſt, of the links that are neareſt to it.

In comparing the different ſpecies of Animals, we find each of them poſſeſſed of powers and faculties peculiar to themſelves, and admirably adapted to the particular ſphere of action which Providence has allotted them. But, amidſt that infinite variety which diſtinguiſhes each ſpecies, we find many qualities in which they are all ſimilar, and ſome which they have in common.

Man is evidently at the head of the Animal Creation. He ſeems not only to be poſſeſt of every ſource of pleaſure, in common with them, but of many others, to which they are altogether ſtrangers. If he is not the only Animal

poſſeſt

poſſeſt of reaſon, he has it in a degree ſo greatly ſuperior, as admits of no compariſon.

* That inſenſible gradation ſo conſpicuous in all the works of Nature, fails, in comparing Mankind with other Animals. There is an infinite diſtance between the faculties of a Man, and thoſe of the moſt perfect Animal; between intellectual power, and mechanic force; between order and deſign, and blind impulſe; between reflection, and appetite.

One Animal governs another only by ſuperior force or cunning, nor can it by any addreſs or train of reaſoning ſecure to itſelf the protection and good offices of another. There is no ſenſe of ſuperiority or ſubordination among them †.

* Buffon.

† Inſtances from bees, birds of paſſage, and ſuch like, do not contradict this obſervation, if rightly underſtood.

Their

Their want of language ſeems owing to their having no regular train or order in their ideas, and not to any deficiency in their organs of ſpeech. Many Animals may be taught to ſpeak, but none of them can be taught to connect any ideas to the words they pronounce. The reaſon, therefore, why they do not expreſs themſelves by combined and regulated ſigns, is, becauſe they have no regular combination in their ideas.

There is a remarkable uniformity in the works of Animals. Each individual of a ſpecies does the ſame things, and in the ſame manner as every other of the ſame ſpecies. They ſeem all to be actuated by one ſoul. On the contrary, among Mankind, every individual thinks and acts in a way almoſt peculiar to himſelf. The only exception to this uniformity of character in the different ſpecies of Animals, ſeems to be among thoſe who

who are moſt connected with Mankind, particularly dogs and horſes.

All Animals expreſs pain and pleaſure by cries and various motions of the body; but laughter and ſhedding of tears are peculiar to Mankind. They ſeem to be expreſſions of certain emotions of the ſoul unknown to other Animals, and are ſcarcely ever obſerved in infants till they are about ſix weeks old. The pleaſures of the imagination, the pleaſure ariſing from ſcience, from the fine arts, and from the principle of curioſity, are peculiar to the Human Species. But above all, they are diſtinguiſhed by the Moral Senſe, and the happineſs flowing from religion, and from the various intercourſes of ſocial life.

We propoſe now to make ſome obſervations on certain advantages which the lower Animals ſeem to poſſeſs above us, and afterwards to enquire how far the

the advantages poſſeſt by Mankind are cultivated by them in ſuch a manner as to render them happier as well as wiſer and more diſtinguiſhed.

There are many Animals who have ſome of the external ſenſes more acute than We have; ſome are ſtronger, ſome ſwifter; but theſe and ſuch other qualities, however advantageous to them in their reſpective ſpheres of life, would be uſeleſs and often very prejudicial to us. But it is a very ſerious and intereſting queſtion, whether they poſſeſs not certain advantages over us, which are not the reſult of their particular ſtate of life, but are advantages in thoſe points, where we ought at leaſt to be on a level with them.

Is it not notorious that all Animals, except ourſelves, enjoy every pleaſure their Natures are capable of, that they are ſtrangers to pain and ſickneſs, and, abſtracting

ſtracting from external accidents, arrive at the natural period of their Being? We ſpeak of wild Animals only. Thoſe that are tame and under our direction partake of all our miſeries.—Is it a neceſſary conſequence of our ſuperior faculties, that not one of ten thouſand of our ſpecies dies a natural death, that we ſtruggle through a ‡ *frail and feveriſh being*, in continual danger of ſickneſs, of pain, of dotage, and the thouſand nameleſs ills that experience ſhews to be the portion of human life?—If this is found to be the deſigned order of Nature, it becomes us cheerfully to ſubmit to it; but if theſe evils appear to be adventitious and unnatural to our conſtitution, it is an enquiry of the laſt importance, whence they ariſe and how they may be remedied.

There is one principle which prevails univerſally in the Brute Creation,

‡ Milton.

and

and is the immediate ſource of all their actions. This principle, which is called Inſtinct, determines them by the ſhorteſt and moſt effectual means to purſue what their ſeveral conſtitutions render neceſſary.

It ſeems to have been the general opinion, that this principle of Inſtinct was peculiar to the Brute Creation; and that Mankind were deſigned by Providence, to be governed by the ſuperior principle of Reaſon, entirely independent of it. But a little attention will ſhew, that Inſtinct is a principle common to us and the whole Animal world, and that, as far as it extends, it is a ſure and infallible guide; tho' the depraved and unnatural ſtate, into which Mankind are plunged, often ſtifles its voice, or renders it impoſſible to diſtinguiſh it from other impulſes which are accidental and foreign to our Nature.

Reaſon

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Reaſon

Reaſon indeed is but a weak principle in Man, in reſpect of Inſtinct, and is generally a more unſafe guide—The proper province of Reaſon is to inveſtigate the cauſes of things, to ſhew us what conſequences will follow from our acting in any particular way, to point out the beſt means of attaining an end, and, in conſequence of this, to be a check upon our Inſtincts, our tempers, our paſſions, and our taſtes: But theſe muſt ſtill be the immediately impelling principles of action. In truth, life, without them, would not only be joyleſs and inſipid, but quickly ſtagnate and be at an end.

Some of the advantages, which the Brute Animals have over us, are poſſeſſed in a conſiderable degree by thoſe of our own ſpecies, who being but juſt above them, and guided in a manner entirely by Inſtinct, are equally ſtrangers

gers to the noble attainments of which their Natures are capable, and to the many miſeries attendant on their more enlightened brethren of Mankind.

It is therefore of the greateſt conſequence, to enquire into the Inſtincts that are natural to Mankind, to ſeparate them from thoſe cravings which bad habits have occaſioned, and, where any doubt remains on this ſubject, to enquire into the analogous Inſtincts of other Animals, particularly into thoſe of the ſavage part of our own ſpecies.

But a great difficulty attends this enquiry. There has never yet been found any claſs of Men who were entirely governed by Inſtinct, by Nature, or by common ſenſe. The moſt barbarous nations differ widely in their manners from one another, and deviate as much from Nature in many particulars, as the moſt poliſhed and moſt luxurious. They

are equally guided by reaſon, variouſly perverted by prejudice, cuſtom, and ſuperſtition. Yet a diſcerning eye will often be able to trace the hand of Nature where her deſigns are moſt oppoſed, and will ſometimes be ſurpriſed with marks of ſuch juſt and acute reaſoning among ſavage Nations, as might do honour to the moſt enlightened. In this view the civil and natural hiſtory of Mankind becomes a ſtudy not merely fitted to amuſe, and gratify curioſity, but a ſtudy ſubſervient to the nobleſt views, to the cultivation and improvement of the Human Species.

It is evident that in comparing Men with other Animals, the Analogy muſt fail in ſeveral reſpects, becauſe they are governed ſolely by the unerring principle of Inſtinct, whereas Men are directed by other principles of action along with this, particularly by the

feeble

feeble and fluctuating principle of Reaſon. But altho' in many particular inſtances it may be impoſſible to aſcertain what is the natural and what is the artificial State of Man, to diſtinguiſh between the voice of Nature and the dictates of Caprice, and to fix the preciſe boundary between the provinces of Inſtinct and Reaſon; yet all Mankind agree to admit, in general, ſuch diſtinctions, and to condemn certain actions as treſpaſſes againſt Nature, as well as deviations from Reaſon. Men may diſpute whether it be proper to let their beards and their nails grow, on the principle of its being natural; but every Human Creature would be ſhocked with the impropriety of feeding an infant with Brandy inſtead of its Mother's Milk, from an inſtant feeling of its being an outrage done to Nature. In order however to avoid all altercation

and ambiguity on this ſubject, we ſhall readily allow that it is our buſineſs, in the conduct of life, to follow whatever guide will lead us to the moſt perfect and laſting happineſs. We apprehend that where the voice of Nature and Inſtinct is clear and explicit, it will be found the ſureſt guide, and where it is ſilent or doubtful, we imagine it would be proper to attend to the analogy of Nature among other Animals, not to be an abſolute rule for our conduct, but as a means of furniſhing light to direct it; and we admit, that, in order to determine what truly is moſt proper for us, the ultimate Appeal muſt be made to cool and impartial Experience.

We ſhould likewiſe avail ourſelves of the obſervations made on tame Animals in thoſe particulars where Art has in ſome meaſure improved upon Nature.

Thus

Thus by a proper attention we can preſerve and improve the breed of Horſes, Dogs, Cattle, and indeed of all other Animals. Yet it is amazing that this Obſervation was never transferred to the Human Species, where it would be equally applicable. It is certain, that notwithſtanding our promiſcuous Marriages, many families are diſtinguiſhed by peculiar circumſtances in their character. This Family Character, like a Family Face, will often be loſt in one generation and appear again in the ſucceeding. Without doubt, Education, Habit, and Emulation, may contribute greatly in many caſes to preſerve it, but it will be generally found, that, independent of theſe, Nature has ſtamped an original impreſſion on certain Minds, which Education may greatly alter or efface, but ſeldom ſo entirely as to prevent its traces from

being ſeen by an accurate obſerver. How a certain character or conſtitution of Mind can be tranſmitted from a Parent to a Child, is a queſtion of more difficulty than importance. It is indeed equally difficult to account for the external reſemblance of features, or for bodily diſeaſes being tranſmitted from a Parent to a Child. But we never dream of a difficulty in explaining any appearance of Nature, which is exhibited to us every day.—A proper attention to this ſubject would enable us to improve not only the conſtitutions, but the characters of our poſterity. Yet we every day ſee very ſenſible people, who are anxiouſly attentive to preſerve or improve the breed of their Horſes, tainting the blood of their Children, and entailing on them, not only the moſt loathſome diſeaſes of the Body, but madneſs, folly, and the moſt unworthy diſpoſitions,

tions, and this too when they cannot plead being ſtimulated by neceſſity, or impelled by paſſion.

We ſhall now proceed to enquire more particularly into the comparative ſtate of Mankind and the inferior Animals.

By the moſt accurate calculation, one half of Mankind die under eight years of age. As this mortality is greateſt among the moſt luxurious part of Mankind, and gradually decreaſes in proportion as the diet becomes ſimpler, the exerciſe more frequent, and the general method of living more hardy, and as it doth not take place among wild Animals, the general foundations of it are ſufficiently pointed out. The extraordinary havock made by diſeaſes among Children, is owing to the unnatural treatment they meet with, which is ill ſuited to the ſingular deli-

cacy of their tender frames. Their own Inſtincts, and the conduct of Nature in rearing other Animals, are never attended to, and they are incapable of helping themſelves. When they are farther advanced in life, the voice of Nature becomes too loud to be ſtifled, and then, in ſpite of the influence of corrupted and adventitious taſte, will be obeyed.

Though it is a maxim univerſally allowed, that a multitude of inhabitants is the firmeſt ſupport of a ſtate, yet the extraordinary mortality among Children has been little attended to by Men of public ſpirit. It is thought a natural evil, and therefore is ſubmitted to without examination *. But the importance

* Thus the loſs of a thouſand men in an engagement arouzes the public attention, and the ſevereſt ſcrutiny is made into the cauſe of it, while

portance of the queſtion will juſtify a more particular enquiry, whether the evil be really natural and unavoidable.

It is an unpopular attempt to attack prejudices eſtabliſhed by time and habit, and ſecured by the corruptions of

while the loſs of thrice that number by ſickneſs paſſes unregarded: yet the latter calamity is by far the moſt grievous, whether we regard the State, or the melancholy fate of the unhappy ſufferers; and therefore calls more loudly for a Public Enquiry. Perhaps in the one caſe the loſs was inevitable, and might lead to victory; the men faced danger with intrepidity, full of the hopes of conqueſt if they ſurvived, or of dying honourably in the cauſe of their country. Perhaps in the other caſe the evil, by proper management, might have been prevented: the men periſhed without being able to make any effort for their preſervation; they ſaw the gradual approaches of death in all its terrors, and fell unlamented, and unſupported by that military ardor and thirſt of glory which enable them to deſpiſe it in the field.

luxurious

luxurious life. It is equally unpleaſant to attempt the reformation of abuſes, without the leaſt proſpect of ſucceſs. Yet there is a ſecret pleaſure in pleading the cauſe of humanity and helpleſs innocence.

Many reaſons have been aſſigned, why the ſtate of Infancy is the moſt ſickly; and why ſo great a proportion of the Human Species is cut off at that early period. Phyſicians have inſiſted largely on the unavoidable dangers ariſing from the ſudden and total change of the animal Œconomy of Infants, that commences immediately upon the Birth; and on the dangers ariſing from the free admiſſion of the external air to their bodies at that time. They have expatiated on the high degree of irritability of their Nervous Syſtem, the delicacy of their whole frame, and the aceſcency of their food. A little reflection, however,

ever, may ſhew us, that this account of the matter, tho' plauſible at firſt view, is not ſatisfactory. This ſingle conſideration refutes it, That all theſe alledged cauſes of the ſicklineſs of Infants are not peculiar to the Human Species, but are found among many other Animals, without being attended with ſuch effects; that the diſeaſes, moſt fatal to Children, are not found among the Savage part of Mankind; and that they prevail, in exact proportion to the progreſs of Effeminacy and Luxury; and in proportion as people forſake the plain dictates, of Inſtinct and Nature, to follow the Light of what they are pleaſed to call Reaſon.

There is, in truth, a greater luxuriancy of Life and Health in Infancy, than in any other period of Life. Infants, we acknowledge, are more delicately ſenſible to Injury, than thoſe advanced

advanced in Life; but, to compenſate this, their Fibres and Veſſels are more capable of Diſtenſion, their whole Syſtem is more flexible, their Fluids are leſs acrid, and leſs diſpoſed to Putreſcence; they bear all Evacuations more eaſily, except that of blood, and, which is an important circumſtance in their favour, they never ſuffer from the terrors of a diſtracted Imagination. Their Spirits are lively and equal; they quickly forget their paſt Sufferings, and never anticipate the future. In conſequence of theſe advantages, Children recover from diſeaſes, under ſuch unfavourable ſymptoms as are never ſurvived by Adults. If they waſte more quickly under ſickneſs, their recovery from it is quick in proportion; and generally more compleat than in older people; as diſeaſes ſeldom leave thoſe baneful effects on their Conſtitutions ſo frequent in

thoſe

thoſe of Adults. In ſhort, a Phyſician ought ſcarce ever to deſpair of a Child's Life, while it continues to breathe.

Every other Animal brings forth its young without any aſſiſtance; but We judge Nature inſufficient for that work; and think a Midwife underſtands it better.—What numbers of Infants as well as of Mothers are deſtroyed by the prepoſterous management of theſe Artiſts is well known to all who have enquired into this matter. The moſt knowing and ſucceſsful practitioners, if they are candid, will own, that in common and natural caſes, Nature is entirely ſufficient, and that their buſineſs is only to aſſiſt her efforts in caſe of weakneſs of the Mother, or an unnatural poſition of the Child.

As ſoon as an Infant comes into the world, our firſt care is to cram it with phyſic.—There is a glareous liquor contained in the bowels of Infants and many other

other Animals when they are born, which it is neceſſary to carry off. The medicine which Nature has prepared for the purpoſe is the Mother's firſt milk. This indeed anſwers the end very effectually; but we think ſome drug forced down the Child's throat will do it much better. The compoſition of this varies according to the fancy of the good Woman who preſides at the birth.—It deſerves to be remarked, when we are on this ſubject, that calves, which are the only Animals generally taken under our peculiar care in theſe circumſtances, are treated in the ſame manner. They have the ſame ſort of phyſic adminiſtered to them, and often with the ſame ſucceſs; many of them dying under the operation, or of its conſequences: and we have the greateſt reaſon to think that more of this ſpecies of Animals die at this period, than of all the other ſpecies of Animals we

we ſee in theſe circumſtances, put together, our own only excepted.

Notwithſtanding the many moving calls of natural Inſtinct in the Child to ſuck the Mother's breaſt, yet the uſual practice has been, obſtinately to deny that indulgence till the third day after the birth. By this time the ſuppreſſion of the natural evacuation of the milk, uſually bringing on a fever, the conſequence proves often fatal to the Mother, or puts it out of her power to ſuckle her Child at that time. The ſudden ſwelling of the breaſts, which commonly happens about the third day, is another bad conſequence of this delay. When the breaſts become thus ſuddenly and greatly diſtended, a Child is not only utterly unable to ſuck, but, by its cries and ſtruggling, fatigues and heats, both itſelf and the Mother. This is another frequent cauſe, which prevents nurſing.

—We

—We muſt obſerve here, to the honour of the gentlemen who had the care of the lying-in hoſpital in London, that they were the firſt who, in this inſtance, brought us back to Nature and common ſenſe; and by this means have preſerved the lives of thouſands of their fellow-creatures. They ordered the Children to be put to the Mother's breaſt as ſoon as they ſhewed a deſire for it, which was generally within ten or twelve hours after the birth. This rendered the uſual doſe of phyſic unneceſſary, the milk-fever was prevented, the milk flowed gradually and eaſily into the breaſts, which before were apparently empty; and things went ſmoothly on in the natural way. We are ſorry however to obſerve, that this practice is not likely to become ſoon general. Phyſicians do not concern themſelves with ſubjects of this kind, nor with the regimen of Mankind, unleſs

unleſs their advice is particularly aſked. Theſe matters are founded on eſtabliſhed cuſtoms and prejudices, which it is difficult to conquer, and dangerous to attack; nor will it ever be attempted by Men who depend on the favor and caprice of the world for their ſubſiſtence, and who find it their intereſt rather to ſooth prejudices than to oppoſe them. If a Mother therefore is determined not to nurſe her own Infant, ſhe ſhould, for her own ſake, ſuckle it at leaſt three or four weeks, and then wean it by degrees from her own breaſt. In this way the more immediate danger ariſing from repelling the milk, is prevented.

When a Mother does not nurſe her own Infant, ſhe does open violence to Nature; a violence unknown among all the inferior Animals, whom Nature intended to ſuckle their young: unknown among the moſt barbarous nations; and

equally unknown among the moſt poliſhed, in the pureſt ages of Greece and Rome. The ſudden check given to the great natural evacuation of Milk, at a time when her weakly ſtate renders her unable to ſuſtain ſo violent a ſhock, is often of the worſt conſequence to herſelf; and the loſs to the Child is much greater than is commonly apprehended. A Woman in this caſe runs an immediate riſk of her life by a milk-fever, beſides the danger of ſwelling and impoſtumes of the breaſt, and ſuch obſtructions in them as often lay the foundation of a future cancer.—Of 4,400 Women in the lying-in hoſpital, only four had milk ſores, and theſe had either no nipples, or former ſore breaſts *.

Some Women indeed have it not in their power to nurſe their Children, for

* Nelſon.

want

want of milk; and ſometimes it is equally improper for the Mother and the Child, on account of ſome particular diſorder which the Mother labours under. But this is very ſeldom the caſe. On the contrary, there are many diſorders incident to Women, of which nurſing is the moſt effectual cure; and delicate conſtitutions are generally ſtrengthened by it. In proof of this we may obſerve, that while a Mother nurſes her Child, her complexion becomes clearer and more blooming, her ſpirits are more uniformly chearful, her appetite is better, and her general habit of body fuller and ſtronger. And it is particularly worthy of obſervation, that fewer Women die while they are nurſing than at any equal period of their lives, if we except the time of pregnancy, during which it is unuſual for a Woman to die

of any diſeaſe, unleſs occaſioned by ſome violent external injury.

Another great inconveniency attending the neglect of nurſing, is the depriving Women of that interval of reſpite and eaſe which Nature intended for them between Child-bearings. A Woman who does not nurſe, has naturally a Child every year; this quickly exhauſts the conſtitution, and brings on the infirmities of old-age before their time; and as this neglect is moſt frequent among Women of faſhion, the delicacy of their conſtitutions is particularly unable to ſuſtain ſuch a violence to Nature. A Woman who nurſes her Child, has an interval of a year and a half or two years betwixt her Children, in which the conſtitution has time to recover its vigour *.

We

* When the natural evacuation of milk from the

We may reckon, among the diſadvantages conſequent on the neglect of nurſing, the Mother's being deprived of a very high pleaſure, of the moſt tender and endearing kind, which remarkably ſtrengthens her attachment to the Infant. It is not neceſſary here to enquire into the cauſe of this particular affection which a Mother feels for the Child ſhe has ſuckled, ſuperior to that which ſhe feels for a Child ſuckled by a ſtranger; but the fact itſelf is indiſputable.

It is not eaſy to eſtimate the injury Children ſuſtain by being deprived of their natural nouriſhment, and, inſtead of it, being ſuckled by the milk of Women of different ages and conſtitutions from their Mothers. Thus far is cer-

the breaſts is ſuppreſſed, it renders the diſcharge of the Lochia more copious, and of longer duration than Nature intended, which is a frequent ſource of the Fluor albus.

tain, that a greater number of thoſe Children die who are nurſed by ſtrangers, than of thoſe who are ſuckled by their own Mothers. This is partly owing however to the want of that care and attention with the helpleſs ſtate of Infancy ſo much requires, and which the anxious affection of a Mother can alone ſupply. Indeed if it was not that Nurſes naturally contract a large portion of the inſtinctive fondneſs of a Mother, for the Infants they ſuckle, many more of them would periſh by want of care. But it ſhould be obſerved, that this acquired attachment cannot reaſonably be expected among Nurſes, in large cities. The ſame perverſion of Nature and manners which prevails there among Women of faſhion, and makes them decline this duty, extends equally to thoſe of lower rank: and it cannot be ſuppoſed that what the call of Nature, not to ſpeak of love

love for the huſband, is unable to effectuate in the Mother, will be found in a hireling, who for a little money turns her own Infant out of doors. But tho' it is true that a Nurſe may acquire by degrees the ſolicitude and tenderneſs of a Mother, yet as this takes place ſlowly, and only in proportion as habit takes the place of Nature, the neglected Child may periſh in the mean time. There reſults even from this poſſible advantage, an inconvenience which is itſelf ſufficient to deter a Woman of any ſenſibility from permitting her Infant to be ſuckled by another: and this is, to have a ſtranger partaking with, or rather alienating from her the rights of a Mother; to ſee her Child love another Woman as well, or better than herſelf; to perceive the affection it retains for its natural parent a matter of favour, and that of its adopted one a duty: for is not the attachment of

conſequences of indigeſtion. It is proper to wean Children by degrees, and to make this and every ſubſequent alteration in their diet as gradual as poſſible, becauſe too ſudden tranſitions in this reſpect are often attended with the worſt conſequences.

While an Infant is fed by the Mother's milk alone, it may be allowed to ſuck as often as it pleaſes. It is then under the peculiar protection of Nature, who will not neglect her charge; and in this caſe has wiſely provided againſt any inconvenience that may ariſe from the ſtomach being overcharged with too much milk, by making the Child throw up the ſuperfluous quantity; which it does without ſickneſs or ſtraining.

If a Mother cannot or will not ſuckle her own Child, it ſhould be given to a Nurſe newly delivered, whoſe conſtitution

tion both of body and of mind reſembles the Mother's as nearly as poſſible, provided that conſtitution be a good one. The Nurſe ſhould continue to live in every reſpect as ſhe has been accuſtomed to do. A tranſition from a plain diet conſiſting moſtly of vegetables, from a pure air and daily exerciſe, if not hard labour, to a full diet of animal food, fermented liquor, the cloſe air of a town, and a total want of exerciſe, cannot fail to affect the health both of the Nurſe and the Child.

The attempt to bring up an Infant entirely by the ſpoon is offering ſuch a violence to Nature, as nothing but the moſt extreme neceſſity can juſtify. If a Child was to be nouriſhed in this way, even by its Mother's milk alone, it would not anſwer. The action of ſucking, like that of chewing, occaſions the ſecretion of a liquor in the Child's mouth,

mouth, which being intimately mixed with the milk, makes it ſit eaſy upon, and properly digeſt in the ſtomach.

Beſides theſe, there are other circumſtances in the rearing of Children, in which, we apprehend, neither Inſtinct nor the Analogy of Nature is properly regarded.

All young Animals naturally delight in the open air, and in perpetual motion; But we ſignify our diſapprobation of this intention of Nature, by confining our Infants moſtly within doors, and ſwathing them from the time they are born as tightly as poſſible.—Thus natural Inſtinct appears very ſtrong when we ſee a Child releaſed from its confinement, in the ſhort interval between pulling off its day cloaths, and ſwathing it again before it is put to ſleep. The evident tokens of delight which the little creature ſhews in recovering the free

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uſe of its limbs, and the ſtrong reluctance it diſcovers to be again remitted to its bondage, one ſhould imagine would ſtrike a conviction of the cruelty and abſurdity of this practice, into the moſt ſtupid of Mankind. This confinement, Boys, in general, are ſooner releaſed from; but the fairer part of the Species ſuffer it, in ſome degree, during life.

Some nations have fancied that Nature did not give a good ſhape to the head, and thought it would be better to mould it into the form of a ſugar-loaf. The Chineſe think a Woman's foot much handſomer, if ſqueezed into a third part of its natural ſize. Some African nations have a like quarrel with the ſhape of the noſe, which they think ought to be laid as flat as poſſible with the face. We laugh at the folly and are ſhocked with the cruelty of theſe barba-

barbarians; but think, with equal abſurdity, that the natural ſhape of a Woman's cheſt is not ſo elegant as we can make it by the confinement of Stays. —The common effects of this practice are diſorders in the ſtomach and obſtructions in the lungs, from their not having ſufficient room to play, which, beſides tainting the breath, cuts off numbers of young Women by conſumptions in the very bloom of life.—But Nature has ſhewn her reſentment of this practice in the moſt ſtriking manner, by rendering above half the Women of faſhion deformed in ſome degree or other. Deformity is peculiar to the civilized part of Mankind, and is almoſt always the work of our own hands. The Turkiſh and Aſiatic Women, who are diſtinguiſhed for the elegance of their form, and the gracefulneſs of their carriage, are accuſtomed from their Infancy

ſaney to wear no dreſs but what is perfectly looſe.—The ſuperior ſtrength, juſt proportions, and agility of Savages are entirely the effects of their hardy education, of their living moſtly abroad in the open air, and of their limbs never having ſuffered any confinement.—The Siameſe, Japoneſe, Indians, Negroes, Savages of Canada, Virginia, Brazil, and moſt of the inhabitants of South America, do not ſwathe their Children, but lay them in a kind of large cradle lined and covered with ſkins or furs. Here they have the free uſe of their limbs; which they improve ſo well, that in two or three months they crawl about on their hands and knees, and in leſs than a year walk without any aſſiſtance. Where Children are ſwathed, or ſo cloſely pinioned down in their cradles, that they cannot move, the * impulſive

* Rouſſeau.

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force of the internal parts of the body diſpoſed to increaſe, finds an inſurmountable obſtacle to the movements required to accelerate their growth. The Infant is continually making fruitleſs efforts, which waſte its powers or retard their progreſs. It is ſcarcely poſſible to ſwathe Children in ſuch a manner as not to give them ſome pain; and the conſtant endeavour to relieve themſelves from an uneaſy poſture, is a frequent cauſe of deformity. When the ſwathing is tight, it impedes the breathing, and the free circulation of the blood, diſturbs the natural ſecretions, and diſorders the conſtitution in a variety of ways. If an Infant is pinioned down in its cradle in ſuch a manner as to prevent the ſuperfluous humour ſecreted in the mouth from being freely diſcharged, it muſt fall down into the ſtomach; where it occaſions

various

various diſorders, eſpecially in time of teething, when there is always a very great ſecretion of this fluid. Another inconvenience which attends this unnatural confinement of Children, is the keeping them from their natural action and exerciſe, which both retards their growth, and diminiſhes the ſtrength of their bodies. It is pretended that Children left thus at liberty, would often throw themſelves into poſtures deſtructive of the perfect conformation of their body. But if a Child ever gets into a wrong ſituation, the uneaſineſs it feels ſoon induces it to change its poſture. Beſides, in thoſe countries where no ſuch precautions are taken, the Children are all robuſt and well proportioned. It is likewiſe ſaid, that if Children were left to the free uſe of their limbs, their reſtleſſneſs would ſubject them to many external injuries; but

tho' they are * heavy, they are proportionably feeble, and cannot move with ſufficient force to hurt themſelves. The true ſource, however, of that wretched ſlavery to which they are condemned is this; an Infant whoſe limbs are at liberty muſt be conſtantly watched, but when it is faſt bound, it requires little attendance from its Nurſe, and may be thrown into any corner.

It is of the utmoſt conſequence to the health of Infants, to keep them perfectly clean and ſweet. The inhabitants of the † Eaſtern countries, particularly Turkey and the natives of America, are extremely attentive to this article. The confined dreſs of our Infants renders a great degree of attention to cleanlineſs peculiarly neceſſary. The cloſe application of any thing acrid to the delicate and ſenſible ſkin of

* Rouſſeau. † Buffon.

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an Infant, gives a very ſpeedy irritation, and is one of the moſt frequent cauſes of Children's crying.

Children when very young never cry but from pain or ſickneſs, and therefore the cauſe of their diſtreſs ſhould be accurately enquired into. If it is allowed to continue, it diſturbs all the animal functions, eſpecially the digeſtive powers; and from the diſorders of theſe moſt of the diſeaſes incident to children proceed. The cries of an Infant are the voice of Nature ſupplicating relief. It can expreſs its wants by no other language. Inſtead of hearkening to this voice, we often ſtifle it, by putting the little wretch into a cradle, where the noiſe and violent motion confound all its ſenſes, and extinguiſh all feelings of pain in a forced and unnatural ſleep. Sometimes they are allowed to cry till their ſtrength is exhauſted. But

their violent ſtruggles to get relief, and the agitations of their paſſions, equally diſorder their conſtitutions; and when a Child's firſt ſenſations partake ſo much of pain and diſtreſs, and when the turbulent paſſions are ſo early awaked and exerciſed, there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect they may have an influence on the future temper.

Children require a great deal of ſleep, particularly in early infancy, nor ſhould it ever be denied them. If they are allowed to be in conſtant motion when they are awake, which they always chooſe to be, there will be no occaſion for rocking them in a cradle: but the ſleep which is forced, by exhauſted Nature ſinking to reſt after ſevere fits of crying, is often too long and too profound. Rocking in cradles is improper in every reſpect, from the confinement they occaſion, from their over-

heating

heating Infants, from their diſordering the digeſtion of their food, and from their procuring an unnatural and forced ſleep.

As Children naturally turn their eyes to the light, their beds or cradles ſhould be lighted from the feet, in ſuch a way as that both eyes may be equally expoſed to it. If the light is on one ſide, the eye that is moſt frequently directed to it will become ſtrongeſt. This is likewiſe a frequent cauſe of ſquinting *.

The miſmanagement of Children is principally owing to over-feeding, over-clothing, want of exerciſe, and of freſh air †. Though, as was before obſerved, a young Child never cries but from pain or ſickneſs, yet the univerſal remedy abſurdly applied for all its diſtreſſes, is

* Buffon.

† See a very ſpirited and judicious eſſay on nurſing, by Dr. Cadogan.

giving it ſomething to eat or to drink, or rocking it in a cradle. If the wants and motions of a child are attended to, it will be found to ſhew ſeveral ſigns of deſiring food before it cries for it, the firſt ſenſations of hunger never being attended with pain. Indeed theſe ſigns are ſeldom obſerved, becauſe Children are ſeldom ſuffered to be hungry. If they were regularly fed only thrice a day, at ſtated intervals, after they are weaned, the ſignals of returning hunger would be as intelligible as if they ſpoke; but while they are crammed with ſome traſh every hour, the calls of natural appetite can never be heard. Their food ſhould be ſimple, and of eaſy digeſtion, and ſhould never be taken hot: after they are weaned, till they are three years old, it ſhould conſiſt of plain milk, panada, well-fermented bread, barley-meal porridge; and at dinner plain light

light broth with barley or rice. All kinds of paſtry, puddings, cuſtards, &c. where the chief ingredients are unfermented flour, eggs, and butter, tho' generally thought to be light, are much heavier on the ſtomach than many kinds of animal food. Fermented liquors of every kind, and all ſort of ſpiceries, are improper. They give a ſtimulus to the digeſtive powers, which they do not require, and, by exciting a falſe appetite, are often the cauſe of their being overcharged. Their drink ſhould be pure water. The quantity of Children's food ſhould be regulated by their appetite; and as they always eat with ſome eagerneſs full as much as they ought, whenever that eagerneſs ceaſes, their food ſhould be immediately withdrawn.

The practice of putting many clothes on Children, indulging them in ſitting

over the fire, ſleeping in ſmall and warm rooms, and preſerving them from being expoſed to the various inclemencies of the weather, relaxes their bodies, and enervates their minds. If Children, together with ſuch an effeminate education are pampered with animal food, rich ſauces, and ſuch other diet as overcharges their digeſtive powers, they become ſickly as well as weak.

It is a general error, that a new-born Infant cannot be kept too warm. From this unfortunate prejudice, a healthy Child is ſoon made ſo tender, that it cannot bear the freſh air without catching cold. A Child can neither be kept too cool, nor too looſe in its dreſs. It wants leſs clothing, in proportion, than a grown perſon, becauſe it is naturally warmer; at leaſt more uniformly and equally warm. This is univerſal among all animals. There are numberleſs inſtances

ſtances of Infants, expoſed and deſerted, that have lived ſeveral days, in ſuch ſevere weather as would have killed moſt adults. Many of the diſeaſes incident to new-born Infants, and to Lying-in Women, ariſe from the hot regimen to which they are ſubjected. It is generally thought neceſſary to keep Lying-in Women in a conſtant, extorted Sweat, by confining them for ſeveral days cloſely to bed, in warm rooms, where great care is taken to exclude the freſh air; by giving them all their drink warm, and obliging them to take down a larger quantity of it than their thirſt demands. If all theſe methods prove inſufficient to force out the deſired Sweat, the aſſiſtance of ſudorific medicines, ſometimes of the heating kind, is called in. There is the greateſt reaſon to believe, that the whole of this artificial ſyſtem of management is highly pernicious. It is contrary to

the Analogy of Nature among all other Animals, and among the uncultivated part of the human ſpecies, who, unleſs in ſome very extraordinary caſes, recover eaſily and ſpeedily, after bringing forth their young, without requiring to be kept warmer than uſual. The frequent deaths, and the ſlow and difficult recoveries of Women after Child-birth, ſhew plainly that there is an error ſomewhere. It is the refuge of ignorance, or the blindneſs of prejudice, to ſay, that theſe evils are natural and unavoidable. The Conſtitution of a Lying-in Woman is indeed naturally more irritable than uſual, but this irritability is much increaſed by a hot regimen, and by keeping her conſtantly diſſolved in Sweats: the effect of which is, to weaken her ſo much, that the leaſt application of external cold often produces the moſt dangerous conſequences. This is conſider-

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ed as an additional reaſon for keeping the unhappy Woman ſtill warmer. It generally happens, that a woman, for ſome days after her delivery, has a conſtant Moiſture on her ſkin; this natural Moiſture is moſt effectually promoted by keeping her as cool as in her uſual health. If the heat is increaſed, inſtead of this ſalutary Perſpiration, a Fever is probably produced, which either ſuppreſſes it entirely, or is attended with a profuſe colliquative Sweat; and often, in conſequence of ſuch Sweat, with a Miliary Eruption. By another fatal error, in miſtaking an Effect for a Cauſe, this Miliary Eruption is conſidered as a critical and highly ſalutary tranſlation of ſome imaginary morbid matter to the Skin; which ought to be promoted, by a warm regimen and ſudorific medicines. Thus, by leaving the plain road of Nature and common Senſe, people involve them-

themſelves in a labyrinth of errors, and fancy they are curing Diſeaſes, when, in truth, they are creating them. It is a certain fact, however ſtrange it may appear, that in a well-regulated Lying-in Hoſpital, Women recover ſooner, and are ſubjected to fewer accidents after Child-birth, notwithſtanding the unavoidable expoſure to more light and noiſe, than Ladies of Faſhion, who are thought to poſſeſs every poſſible conveniency, in their own houſes. The reaſon is obvious: In ſuch an Hoſpital, the Women lie in a large ward, kept cool and well ventilated, and under the direction and abſolute government of a Phyſician, who is not fettered by other people's prejudices, but feels himſelf at full liberty to act according to the dictates of his own Underſtanding and Experience.

But we return to our Subject.—Children

dren ſhould have no ſhoes or ſtockings, at leaſt till they are able to run abroad. They would ſtand firmer, learn to walk ſooner, and have their limbs better proportioned, if they were never cramped with ligatures of any kind. Beſides, ſtockings are a very uncleanly piece of dreſs, and always keep an Infant's legs cold and wet, if they are not ſhifted almoſt every hour.

The active principle is ſo vigorous and overflowing in a Child, that it loves to be in perpetual motion itſelf, and to have every object around it in motion, This exuberant activity is given it for the wiſeſt purpoſes; as it has more to do and more to learn in the firſt three years of its life, than it has in thirty years of any future period of it. But that lively and reſtleſs ſpirit, which in infancy ſeemed to animate every thing around it, gradually contracts itſelf, as the Child

advances

advances in Life, nature requiring no more motion than is neceſſary for its preſervation, and ſinks at laſt into that calm and ſtillneſs which cloſe the latter days of human life.

We ſhould freely indulge this active ſpirit and the reſtleſs curioſity of Children, by allowing them to move about at their pleaſure. This exerciſe gives ſtrength and agility to their limbs and vigour to their conſtitution. They ſhould be allowed and even encouraged to handle objects from their earlieſt infancy, and be ſuffered to approach them as ſoon as they are able to move on their hands and knees. It is only by touch that we acquire juſt ideas of the figure and ſituation of bodies, and therefore we cannot be too early accuſtomed to examine by this ſenſe every viſible body within our reach. All theſe purpoſes, however, are fruſtrated by In-

fants being confined in their Nurſes arms till they are able to walk alone. This confinement is likewiſe very apt to give a twiſt to their ſhape, if the Nurſe is not particularly careful to carry them alternately in both arms, tho' this twiſt may not appear for many years after. But a ſtill more important injury may be done to them by this practice, ſo univerſal among thoſe of better rank; the injury ariſing from their having too much or too little exerciſe, or from its being given them at an improper time. If a Child is ſuffered to move about at its pleaſure, like any other young animal, from the time it is two or three months old, unerring Inſtinct will direct it to take preciſely the Quantity of Exerciſe, and to take it at the preciſe times which are moſt proper. But if it is carried always in a Nurſe's arms, theſe important circumſtances muſt be regulated

lated by her peculiar temper or caprice. It is eaſy to foreſee ſome of the numerous inconveniences that muſt ariſe from this.

Neither ought Children to be aſſiſted, in their learning to walk, by leading-ſtrings. The only uſe of theſe is to ſave trouble to Nurſes, who, by allowing the Children to ſwing in them, often hurt their ſhape, and retard their progreſs in walking. They are leſs ſubject to fall when they have no ſuch artificial aſſiſtance to depend on; and they cannot too early be made ſenſible that they are never to expect a ſupport or aſſiſtance in doing any thing which they are able to do for themſelves. When Infants have eſcaped from the hands of their Nurſes and are able to run about and ſhift for themſelves, they generally do well. It is commonly thought that weakly Children ſhould not be put on their legs,

legs, eſpecially if they are the leaſt bent or crooked: but experience ſhews that crooked legs will grow in time ſtrong and ſtrait by frequent walking, while diſuſe makes them worſe and worſe every day *.

Cities are the graves of the human ſpecies †. They would periſh in a few generations, if they were not conſtantly recruited from the country. The confined, putrid air which moſt of their inhabitants breathe, their foul feeding, their want of natural exerciſe, but, above all, their debauchery, ſhorten their lives, ruin their conſtitutions, and produce a puny and diſeaſed race of Children.

Every circumſtance points out the country as the proper place for the education of Children; the purity of the air, the variety of ruſtic ſports, the

* Cadogan. † Rouſſeau.

plainneſs of diet, the ſimplicity and innocence of manners, all concur to recommend it. Crowding Children together in hoſpitals is extremely pernicious to their health, both from the confinement they are ſubjected to, and from the unwholeſome air occaſioned by a number of people living in the ſame houſe. But it is ſtill more pernicious to confine them, before they have attained their full growth and ſtrength, to ſedentary employments, where they breathe a putrid air, and are reſtrained from the free uſe of their limbs. The uſual effect of this confinement is, either to cut them off early in life, or to render their conſtitutions weak and ſickly. The inſatiable thirſt for money, not only hardens the heart againſt every ſentiment of humanity, but makes Men blind to that very intereſt which they ſo anxiouſly purſue. The ſame principles

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of ſound policy, which induces them to ſpare their horſes and cattle, till they arrive at their full ſize and vigour, ſhould naturally lead them to grant a like reſpite to their children.

Tho' diet demands the greateſt attention, in puny conſtitutions, yet it admits of a very great latitude in Children hardened by exercíſe and daily expoſed to the viciſſitudes of the weather. It is impoſſible to aſcertain what the human body may be brought to bear, if it is gradually inured to the intemperance of ſeaſons and elements, to hunger, thirſt, and fatigue. Before it hath acquired ſettled habits, we may induce almoſt any we pleaſe, without danger; when it is once arrived at its full growth and conſiſtence, every material alteration is dangerous. But the delicacy and luxury of modern education deſtroy the foundation of this native vigour and flexi-

bility. Notwithſtanding the variety of abſurd and unnatural cuſtoms that prevail among barbarous nations, they are not ſickly as we are, becauſe the hardineſs of their conſtitutions enables them to bear all exceſſes. The women who inhabit the iſthmus of America are plunged in cold water, along with their Infants, immediately after their delivery, without any bad conſequence. All thoſe diſeaſes which ariſe from catching of cold, or a ſudden check given to the perſpiration, are found only among the civilized part of Mankind. An old Roman, or an Indian, in the purſuits of war or hunting, would plunge into a river whilſt in a profuſe ſweat, without fear and without danger. A ſimilar hardy education would make us all equally proof againſt the bad effects of ſuch accidents.—The greater care we take to prevent catching cold, by the various

contrivances of modern luxury, the more we become ſubjected to it.—We can guard againſt cold only by rendering ourſelves ſuperior to its influence.—There is a ſtriking proof of this in the vigorous conſtitutions of Children braced by the daily uſe of the cold bath; and ſtill a ſtronger proof, in thoſe children who are thinly clad, and ſuffered to be without ſtockings or ſhoes in all ſeaſons and weathers.

Nature never made any country too cold for its own inhabitants.—In cold climates ſhe has made exerciſe and even fatigue habitual to them, not only from the neceſſity of their ſituation, but from choice, their natural diverſions being all of the athletic and violent kind. But the ſoftneſs and effeminacy of modern manners has both deprived us of our natural defence againſt the diſeaſes moſt incident to our own climate, and ſub-

jected us to all the inconveniences of a warm one, particularly to that debility and morbid ſenſibility of the nervous ſyſtem, which lays the foundation of moſt of our diſeaſes, and deprives us at the ſame time of the ſpirit and reſolution to ſupport them.

Moſt of thoſe Children who die under two years of age, are cut off by the conſequences of teething. This is reckoned a natural and inevitable evil; but as all other animals, and the uncultivated part of Mankind, get their teeth without danger, there is reaſon to ſuſpect this is not a natural evil. The proceſs of Nature in breeding teeth is different from her uſual method of operating in the human body, which is without pain, and commonly without exciting any particular ſenſation. But though cutting of the teeth may be naturally attended with ſome pain, and even a ſmall degree of

fever,

fever, yet if a Child's conſtitution be perfectly ſound and vigorous, probably neither of theſe would be followed by any bad conſequence. The irritability of the nervous Syſtem, and the inflammatory diſpoſition of the habit at this period, are probably owing in a great meaſure to too full living, to the conſtitution being debilitated by the want of proper Exerciſe, by the want of free Expoſure to the open Air, and the numberleſs other Effeminacies of modern Education. Other animals facilitate the cutting of their teeth by gnawing ſuch bodies as their gums can make ſome impreſſion on. An Infant, by the ſame mechanical Inſtinct, begins very early to carry every thing to its mouth. As ſoon as this indication of Nature is obſerved, it ſhould be diligently followed, by giving the Child ſomething to gnaw, which is inoffenſive, which is cooling,

and which yields a little to the preſſure of its gums, as liquorice-root, hard biſcuit, wax candle, and ſuch like. A perfectly hard body, ſuch as coral, does not anſwer the purpoſe, nor will a Child uſe it, when its gums are in the leaſt pained.

We cannot help obſerving here, the very great prejudice which Children of better rank often ſuſtain, by a too early application to different branches of education. The moſt important poſſeſſion that can be ſecured to a Child, is a healthy and vigorous conſtitution, a chearful temper, and a good heart. Moſt ſickly Children either die very ſoon, or drag out an unhappy life, burdenſome to themſelves, and uſeleſs to the public. There is nothing indeed to hinder a Child from acquiring every uſeful branch of knowledge, and every elegant accompliſhment ſuited to his age, without impairing

pairing his conſtitution; but then the greateſt attention muſt be had to the powers of his body and mind, that they neither be allowed to languiſh for want of exerciſe, nor be exerted beyond what they can bear. Nature brings all her works to perfection by a gradual proceſs. Man, the laſt and moſt perfect of her works below, arrives at his by a very ſlow proceſs. In the early period of life, Nature ſeems particularly ſolicitous to increaſe and invigorate the bodily powers. One of the principal inſtruments ſhe uſes for this purpoſe is, that reſtleſs activity which makes a Child delight to be in perpetual motion. The faculties of the mind diſcloſe themſelves in a certain regular ſucceſſion. The powers of imagination firſt begin to appear by an unbounded curioſity, a love of what is great, ſurprizing, and marvellous, and in many caſes, of what is ridiculous.

The

The perception of what is beautiful in Nature does not come ſo early. The progreſs of the affections is ſlower: at firſt they are moſtly of the ſelfiſh kind, but, by degrees, the heart dilates, and the ſocial and public affections make their appearance. The progreſs of reaſon is extremely ſlow. In childhood the mind can attend to nothing but what keeps its active powers in conſtant agitation, nor can it take in all the little diſcriminating circumſtances which are neceſſary to the forming a true judgment either of perſons or things. For this cauſe it is very little capable of entering into abſtract reaſoning of any kind, till towards the age of manhood, It is even long after this period before any juſtneſs of taſte can be acquired, becauſe that requires the moſt improved uſe of the affections, of the reaſoning faculty, and of the powers of imagination.

tion. If this is the order and plan of Nature in bringing Man to the perfection of his kind, it ſhould be the buſineſs of education religiouſly to follow it, to aſſiſt the ſucceſſive openings of the human powers, to give them their proper exerciſe, but to take care that they never be over-charged. If no regard is had to this rule, we may indeed accelerate the ſeeming maturity of our faculties, as we can rear a plant in a hot-bed, but we ſhall never be able to bring them to that full maturity, which a more ſtrict attention to Nature would have brought them to. This is, however, ſo little obſerved in the education of Children of better faſhion, that Nature is, almoſt from the beginning, thwarted in all her motions. Many hours are ſpent every day in ſtudies painfully diſagreeable, that give exerciſe to no faculty but the memory, and only

only load it with what will probably never turn to either future pleaſure or utility. Some of the faculties are overſtrained, by putting them upon exertions diſproportioned to their ſtrength; others languiſh for want of being exerciſed at all. No knowledge or improvement is here acquired by the free and ſpontaneous exertion of the natural powers: it is all artificial and forced. Thus health is often ſacrificed, by the body being deprived of its requiſite exerciſe, the temper hurt by frequent contradiction, and the vigour of the mind impaired by unnatural and overſtrained exertions. The happieſt period of Human Life, the days of health, chearfulneſs and innocence, on which we always reflect with pleaſure, not without ſome mixture of regret, are ſpent in the midſt of tears, puniſhments, and ſlavery; and this is to anſwer no other end

end but to make a Child a Man ſome years before Nature intended he ſhould be one. It is not meant here to inſinuate, that Children ſhould be left to form themſelves without any direction or aſſiſtance. On the contrary, they need the moſt watchful attention from their earlieſt infancy, and often contract ſuch bad health, ſuch bad tempers, and ſuch bad habits, before they are thought proper ſubjects of education, as will remain with them, in ſpite of all future care, as long as they live. We only intended to point out the impropriety of precipitating education, by forſaking the order in which Nature unfolds the human powers, and by ſacrificing preſent happineſs to uncertain futurity. There is a kind of culture that will produce a Man at fifteen, with his character and manners perfectly formed: but then he is

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a little Man; his faculties are cramped, and he is incapable of further improvement. By a different culture he might not perhaps arrive at full maturity till five-and-twenty; but then he would be by far the ſuperior man, bold, active, and vigorous, with all his powers capable of ſtill further enlargement. The buſineſs of education is indeed, in every view, a very difficult taſk. It requires an intimate knowledge of Nature, as well as great addreſs, to direct a Child, before he is able to direct himſelf, to lead him without his being conſcious of it, and to ſecure the moſt implicit obedience, without his feeling himſelf to be a ſlave. It requires beſides ſuch a conſtant watchfulneſs, ſuch inflexible ſteadineſs, and, at the ſame time, ſo much patience, tenderneſs, and affection, as can ſcarcely be expected but from the heart of a parent.

Theſe

Theſe few obſervations are ſelected from a great number that might be mentioned, to prove that many of the calamities complained of as peculiarly affecting the Human Species, are not neceſſary conſequences of our conſtitution, but are entirely the reſult of our own caprice and folly, in paying greater regard to vague and ſhallow reaſonings, than to the plain dictates of Nature, and the analogous conſtitutions of other Animals.—They are taken from that period of life, where Inſtinct is the only active principle of our Nature, and conſequently where the analogy between us and other Animals will be found moſt compleat.—When our ſuperior and more diſtinguiſhing faculties begin to expand themſelves, the analogy becomes indeed leſs perfect. But, if we would enquire into the cauſe of our weak and ſickly habits, we muſt go back to the ſtate of Infancy.

Infancy. The foundation of the evil is laid there. Habit ſoon ſucceeds in the place of Nature, and, however unworthy a ſucceſſor, requires almoſt equal attention. As years advance, additional cauſes of theſe evils are continually taking place, and diſorders of the body and mind mutually inflame each other.—But this opens a field too extenſive for this place. We ſhall only obſerve, that the decline of Human Life exhibits generally a ſcene quite ſingular in Nature.—The gradual decay of the more humane and generous feelings of the heart, as well as of all our boaſted ſuperior powers of imagination and underſtanding, till at laſt they are utterly obliterated, and leave us in a more helpleſs and wretched ſituation than that of any animal whatever, is ſurely of all others the moſt humbling conſideration to the pride of man.—Yet there is great reaſon to believe

lieve that this melancholy Exit is not our natural one, but that it is owing to cauſes foreign and adventitious to our Nature.—There is the higheſt probability, at leaſt, that if we led natural lives, we ſhould retain to the laſt the full exerciſe of all our ſenſes, and the full poſſeſſion of thoſe ſuperior faculties, which we hope we ſhall retain in a future and more perfect ſtate of exiſtence.—There is no reaſon to doubt but it is in the power of art to protract life even beyond the period which Nature has aſſigned to it. But this enquiry, however important, is trifling, when compared to that which leads us to the means of enjoying it, whilſt we do live.

SECTION II.

THE advantages, which Mankind poſſeſs above the reſt of the Animal Creation, are principally derived from Reaſon, from the Social Principle, from Taſte, and from Religion. We ſhall proceed to enquire how much each of theſe contribute to make life more happy and comfortable.

Reaſon, of itſelf, cannot, any more than riches, be reckoned an immediate bleſſing to Mankind. It is only the proper application of it, to render them more happy, that can entitle it to that name. Nature has furniſhed us with a variety

variety of internal Senſes and Taſtes, unknown to other Animals. All theſe, if properly cultivated, are ſources of pleaſure, but without culture, moſt of them are ſo faint and languid, that they convey no gratification to the Mind. This culture is the peculiar province of Reaſon. It belongs to reaſon to analyze our Taſtes and Pleaſures, and, after a proper arrangement of them according to their different degrees of excellence, to aſſign to each that degree of cultivation and indulgence which its rank deſerves, and no more. But if Reaſon, inſtead of thus doing juſtice to the various gifts of Providence, be unattentive to her charge, or beſtow her whole attention on One, neglecting the reſt, and if, in conſequence of this, little happineſs be enjoyed in life, in ſuch a caſe Reaſon can with no great propriety be called a bleſſing. Let us then examine

its effects among thoſe who poſſeſs it in the moſt eminent degree.

The natural advantages of Genius, and a ſuperior Underſtanding, are extremely obvious. One unacquainted with the real ſtate of human affairs, would never doubt of their ſecuring to their poſſeſſors the moſt honourable and important ſtations among mankind, nor ſuſpect that they could ever fail to place them at the head of all the uſeful arts and profeſſions. If he were told this was not the caſe, he would conclude it muſt be owing to the folly or wickedneſs of Mankind, or to ſome unhappy concurrence of accidents, that ſuch Men were deprived of their natural ſtations and rank in life. But in fact it is owing to none of theſe cauſes. A ſuperior degree of Reaſon and Underſtanding does not uſually form a man either for being a more uſeful member of ſociety,

ciety, or more happy in himſelf. Theſe talents are uſually diſſipated in ſuch a way, as renders them of little account, either to the public or to the poſſeſſor. —This waſte of Genius exhibits a moſt aſtoniſhing and melancholy proſpect. A large library gives a full view of it. Among the multitude of books of which it is compoſed, how few engage any one's attention? Such as are addreſſed to the heart and imagination, ſuch as paint life and manners in juſt colours and intereſting ſituations, and the very few that give genuine deſcriptions of Nature in any of her forms, or of the uſeful and elegant arts, are read and admired. But the far more numerous volumes, productions of the intellectual powers, profound ſyſtems and diſquiſitions of philoſophy and theology, are neglected and deſpiſed, and remain only as monuments of the pride, ingenuity,

and impotency of Human Underſtanding. Yet many of the inventors of theſe ſyſtems diſcover the greateſt acuteneſs and depth of Genius; half of which, exerted on any of the uſeful or elegant arts of life, would have rendered their names immortal.—But it has ever been the misfortune of philoſophical Genius to graſp at objects which Providence has placed beyond its reach, and to aſcend to general principles and to build ſyſtems, without that previous large collection and proper arrangement of facts, which alone can give them a ſolid foundation.—Notwithſtanding this was pointed out by Lord Bacon, in the fulleſt and cleareſt manner, yet no attempts have been made to cultivate any one branch of uſeful philoſophy upon his excellent plan, except by Sir Iſaac Newton, Mr. Boyle, and a very few others.—Genius is naturally impatient

of reſtraint, keen and impetuous in its purſuits; it delights therefore in building with materials which the mind contains within itſelf, or ſuch as the Imagination can create at pleaſure. But the materials, requiſite for the improvement of any uſeful art or ſcience, muſt all be collected from without, by ſuch ſlow and patient obſervation, as little ſuits the vivacity of Genius, and generally requires more bodily activity, than is uſually found among Philoſophers.

Almoſt the only pure productions of the Underſtanding, that have continued to command reſpect, are thoſe of Abſtract Mathematicks. Theſe will always be valuable, independant of their application to the uſeful arts. The exerciſe they give to the invention, and the agreeable ſurpriſe they excite in the Mind, by exhibiting unexpected relations of figures and quantity, are of

themſelves natural ſources of pleaſure. This is the only ſcience, the principles of which the philoſopher carries in his own Mind; infallible principles to which he can ſafely truſt.

Tho' Men of Genius cannot bear the fetters of method and ſyſtem, yet they are the only proper people to plan them out. The Genius to lead and direct in philoſophy is diſtinct from, and almoſt incompatible with the Genius to execute. Lord Bacon was a remarkable inſtance of this. He brought the Syſtematic Method of the Schoolmen, which was founded on Metaphyſical and often Nominal Subtilties, into deſerved contempt, and laid down a method of invegiſtation founded on the juſteſt and moſt enlarged views of Nature, but which neither himſelf nor ſucceeding Philoſophers have had patience to put in ſtrict execution.

For

For the reaſons above mentioned, it will be found that ſcarcely any of the uſeful arts of life owe their improvements to Philoſophers. They have been principally obliged to accidental diſcoveries, or to the happy natural ſagacity of Men, who exerciſed thoſe arts in private, and who were unacquainted with and undebauched by philoſophy.—This has in a particular manner been the fate of Medicine, the moſt uſeful of all thoſe arts. If by Medicine be meant the art of preſerving health, and reſtoring it when loſt, any Man of ſenſe and candor, who has been regularly bred to it, will own that his time has been moſtly taken up with enquiries into branches of learning, which upon trial he finds utterly unprofitable to the main ends of his profeſſion, or waſted in reading uſeleſs theories and voluminous explanations and commentaries on theſe theories; and will ingenuouſly

nuouſly acknowledge, that every thing uſeful, which he ever learned from books in the courſe of many years ſtudy, might be taught to any Man of common ſenſe and attention in almoſt as many months, and that a few years experience is worth all his library.—Medicine in reality owes more to that illiterate enthuſiaſt, Paracelſus, for introducing ſome of the moſt uſeful remedies, than to any phyſician who has wrote ſince the days of Hippocrates, if we except Dr. Sydenham; who owes his reputation entirely to a great natural ſagacity in making obſervations, and to a ſtill more uncommon candor in relating them. What little medical philoſophy he had, which was as good as his time afforded, ſerved only to warp his Genius, and render his writings more perplexed and tireſome.

But what ſhews in the ſtrongeſt light at what an awful diſtance Philoſophers have

have uſually kept from enquiries of general utility to mankind, is, that Agriculture, as a ſcience, is yet only in its infancy.—A mathematician or philoſopher, if he happens to poſſeſs a farm, does not underſtand the conſtruction of his cart or plough ſo well as the fellow who drives them, nor is he ſo well acquainted with the method of cultivating his ground to the greateſt advantage. We have indeed many Syſtems of Agriculture, that is, we have large compilations of general maxims and principles, along with a profuſion of what is called philoſophical reaſoning on the ſubject. But the capital deficiency in Huſbandry is, a copious collection of particular Obſervations and Experiments, fully and clearly narrated, well atteſted, and properly arranged. Theſe alone can give any authority to general Maxims. Without theſe we ought to diſtruſt

diſtruſt all ſuch Maxims, as we know many of them are founded on facts, either totally falſe or very imperfectly narrated, and that others are eſtabliſhed on very erroneous reaſoning from facts that are indeed unqueſtionable.

It is with pleaſure, however, that we obſerve the Genius of a more enlarged philoſophy ariſing, a philoſophy ſubſervient to life and public utility. Since knowledge has come to be more generally diffuſed, that ſpirit of free enquiry, which formerly employed itſelf in theology and politics, begins now to pierce into other ſciences. The authority of antiquity and great names, in ſubjects of opinion, is leſs regarded. Men begin to be weary of theories which lead to no uſeful conſequences, and have no foundation but in the imagination of ingenious Men. The load of learned rubbiſh, under which ſcience has lain

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ſo long concealed, partly for the meaneſt and vileſt purpoſes, begins to be taken off; and there ſeems to be a general diſpoſition in Mankind to expoſe to their deſerved contempt thoſe quackiſh and unworthy arts, which have ſo often diſgraced literature and gentlemen of a liberal profeſſion. The true and only method of promoting ſcience, is to communicate it with clearneſs and preciſion, and in a language as much diveſted of technical terms as the nature of the ſubject will admit. What renders this particularly neceſſary is, that ſpeculative Men, who have a Genius for arrangement, and for planning uſeful enquiries, are very often, for reaſons before given, deficient in the executive part. The principles therefore of every ſcience ſhould be explained by them with all poſſible perſpicuity, in order to render them more gene-

generally underſtood, and to make their application to the uſeful arts more eaſy. We have a ſtriking inſtance of the good effects of this in Chemiſtry. This ſcience lay for many ages involved in the deepeſt obſcurity, concealed under a jargon intelligible to none but a few adepts, and, by a ſtrange aſſociation, frequently interwoven with the wildeſt religious enthuſiaſm. Boerhaave had the very high merit of reſcuing it from this obſcurity, and of explaining it in a language intelligible to every man of common ſenſe. Since that time, Chemiſtry has made very quick advances. The French philoſophers, in particular, have deſerved well of Mankind for their endeavours to render this ſcience, as well as every branch of natural philoſophy, ſubſervient to the uſeful and elegant arts; and have the additional merit of communicating their knowledge

ledge in the eaſieſt and moſt agreeable manner. M. Buffon has not only given us the beſt natural hiſtory, but, by the beauty of his compoſition and elegance of his ſtile, has rendered a ſubject, which, in moſt hands, has proved a very dry one, both pleaſing and intereſting.

The ſame liberal and manly ſpirit of enquiry which has diſcovered itſelf in other branches of knowledge, begins to find its way into Medicine. Greater attention is now paid to experiment and obſervation; the inſufficiency of any idle theory is more quickly detected, and the pedantry of the profeſſion meets with its deſerved ridicule. We canot avoid mentioning here, for the honour of our own counry, that Pharmacy has been lately reſcued from a ſtate that was a ſcandal to Phyſic and common ſenſe, and is now brought into

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a judicious, conciſe, and tolerably elegant ſyſtem. Even Agriculture, the moſt natural, the moſt uſeful, and, among the moſt honourable becauſe moſt independent employments, which many years ago began to engage the attention of gentlemen, is now thought a ſubject not unworthy the attention of philoſophers. M. du Hamel, who is the Dr. Hales of France, has ſet a noble example in this way, as he does in promoting every other branch of knowledge connected with public utility *.

* His example has been followed by ſome others in his own Country and in Switzerland; but in Britain the genuine Spirit of Experimental Agriculture begins to diffuſe itſelf with a zeal and rapidity that promiſes ſoon to eſtabliſh this Science on the moſt ſolid foundation: the public lies under particular obligations, on this ſubject, to the ſpirit, ingenuity, and induſtry of Mr. Young.

Nothing

Nothing contributes more to deprive the world of the fruits of great parts, than the paſſion for univerſal knowledge, ſo conſtantly annexed to thoſe who poſſeſs them. By means of this the flame of Genius is waſted in the endleſs labour of accumulating promiſcuous or uſeleſs facts, while it might have enlightened the moſt uſeful arts by concentrating its force upon a ſingle object. This diſſipation of Genius is moſt effectually checked by the honeſt love of fame, which prompts a Man to appear in the world as an author. This neceſſarily circumſcribes his excurſions, and determines the force of his Genius to one point. This likewiſe reſcues him from that uſual abuſe and proſtitution of fine parts, the waſting of the greateſt part of his time in reading, which is really the effect of lazineſs. Here the Mind, being in a great meaſure paſſive, becomes

ſurfeited with knowledge which it never digeſts: the memory is burdened with a load of nonſenſe and impertinence, while the powers of Genius and Invention languiſh for want of exerciſe.

Having obſerved of how little conſequence a great Underſtanding generally is to the public, let us next conſider the effects it has in promoting the happineſs of the individual.—It is very evident that thoſe who devote moſt of their time to the exerciſes of the Underſtanding, are far from being the happieſt Men. They enjoy indeed the pleaſure ariſing from the purſuit and diſcovery of Truth. Perhaps too the vanity ariſing from a conſciouſneſs of ſuperior talents adds not a little to their happineſs. But there are many natural ſources of pleaſure from which they are in a great meaſure cut off.—All the public and ſocial affections in common with every

Taſte

Taſte natural to the Human Mind, if they are not properly exerciſed, grow languid. People who devote moſt of their time to the cultivation of their Underſtandings, muſt of courſe live retired and abſtracted from the world. The ſocial affections (thoſe inexhauſtible ſources of happineſs) have therefore no play, and conſequently loſe their natural warmth and vigour. The private and ſelfiſh affections however are not proportionably reduced. Envy and Jealouſy, the moſt ungenerous and moſt tormenting of all paſſions, prevail remarkably among this rank of men.

Hence perhaps there is leſs friendſhip among learned Men, and eſpecially among authors, than in any other claſs of Mankind. People of independent fortunes, who have no views of intereſt or ambition to gratify, naturally

connect themſelves with ſuch as reſemble them in their taſtes and ſentiments, and as their purſuits do not interfere, their friendſhips may be ſincere and laſting. In thoſe profeſſions likewiſe where intereſt is conſidered as the immediate object, we often find Men very cordially attached to one author, if the field be large enough to admit them all. But in the purſuits of Fame and Vanity, the caſe is very different. There is a jealouſy here that admits no rival, that makes people conſider whatever is given to others as taken away from themſelves. Hence the expreſſive ſilence, or the cold, extorted, meaſured approbation, given by rival authors to thoſe works of Genius, which more impartial and diſintereſted Judges receive with the warmeſt and moſt unreſerved applauſe. Such a generoſity, ſuch a greatneſs of Soul, as

render one ſuperior to ſo mean a jealouſy, are perhaps the rareſt virtues to be found among Mankind.

This ſtate of war among Men of Genius and Learning, not only prevents each of them in ſome meaſure from receiving that portion of Fame to which he is juſtly entitled, but is one of the principal cauſes which exclude them from that influence and aſcendency in the different profeſſions and affairs of life, which their ſuperior talents would otherwiſe readily procure them. Dull people, though they do not comprehend Men of Genius, are afraid of them, and naturally unite againſt them, and the mutual jealouſies and diſſenſions among ſuch Men, give the dunces all the advantages they could wiſh for. As the ſocial affections become languid, among thoſe who devote their whole time to ſpeculative ſcience, becauſe they are not

exerciſed, the public affections, the love of liberty and of a native country, become feeble for the ſame reaſon. There are perhaps no Men who embrace ſentiments of patriotiſm and public liberty with ſo much ardor, as thoſe who are juſt entering upon the world, and who have got a very liberal and claſſical education. Youth indeed is the ſeaſon when every generous and elevated ſentiment moſt eaſily finds its way to the heart: at this happy period, that high ſpirit of independence, that zeal for the public, which animated the Greek and Roman people, communicate themſelves to the ſoul with a peculiar warmth and enthuſiaſm. But this fervor too ſoon ſubſides. If young men engage in public and active life, every manly and diſintereſted purpoſe is in danger of being loſt, amidſt the univerſal diſſipation and corruption of manners,

ners, that ſurround them; a depravity of manners now become ſo enormous, that any pretenſion to public Virtue is conſidered either as hypocriſy or folly. If, on the other hand, they devote themſelves to a ſpeculative, ſedentary life, abſtracted from Society, all the active Virtues and active Powers of the Mind are ſtill more certainly extinguiſhed. A capacity for vigorous and ſteady exertions can only be preſerved by regular habits of Activity. Love of a Country and of a Public cannot ſubſiſt among Men, who neither know nor love the individuals which compoſe that Public. If a Man has a family and friends, theſe give him an intereſt in the Community, and attach him to it; becauſe their honour and happineſs, which he regards as much as his own, are eſſentially connected with its welfare. But if he is a ſingle, ſolitary Being, unconnected with family or

friends, there is little to attach him to one country in preference to another. If any encroachment is threatened againſt his perſonal liberty or property, he may think it more eligible to convey himſelf to another country, where he can live unmoleſted, than to ſtruggle, at the riſk of his life and fortune, againſt ſuch encroachments at home. Beſides, we generally find retired ſpeculative Men, who value themſelves on their literary accompliſhments, very much out of humour with the world, if it has not rewarded them according to their own ſenſe of their importance, which it is ſeldom poſſible to do. Swollen with pride and envy, they range all mankind into two claſſes, the Knaves and the Fools. But how can we ſuppoſe one ſhould love a Country or a Community conſiſting of ſuch worthleſs Members?

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When abſtraction from company is carried far, it occaſions groſs ignorance of life and manners, and neceſſarily deprives a Man of all thoſe little accompliſhments and graces which are eſſential to poliſhed and elegant ſociety, and which can only be acquired by mixing with the world. The want of theſe is often an inſuperable bar to the advancement of perſons of real merit, and proves therefore a frequent ſource of their diſguſt at the world, and conſequently at themſelves; for no Man can be happy in himſelf, who thinks ill of every one around him.

The general complaint of the neglect of merit does not ſeem to be well founded. It is unreaſonable for any Man, who lives detached from ſociety, to complain that his merit is neglected, when he never has made it known. The natural reward of mere Genius, is the eſteem

eſteem of thoſe who know and are judges of it. This reward is never withheld. There is a like unreaſonable complaint, that little regard is commonly paid to good qualities of the heart. But it ſhould be conſidered, that the world cannot ſee into the heart, and can therefore only judge of its goodneſs by viſible effects. There is a natural and proper expreſſion of good affections, which ought always to accompany them, and in which true politeneſs principally conſiſts. This expreſſion may be counterfeited, and ſo may obtain the reward due to genuine virtue; but where this natural index of a worthy character is wanting, or where there is even an outward expreſſion of bad diſpoſitions, the world cannot be blamed for judging from ſuch appearances.

Bad health is another common attendant on great parts, when theſe parts are

are exerted, as is uſually the caſe, rather in a ſpeculative than active life.—It is obſerved that great quickneſs and vivacity of Genius is commonly attended with a remarkable delicacy of conſtitution, and a peculiar ſenſibility of the nervous ſyſtem, and that thoſe, who poſſeſs it, ſeldom arrive at old age. A ſedentary, ſtudious life greatly increaſes this natural weakneſs of conſtitution, and brings on that train of nervous complaints and low ſpirits, which render life a burden to the poſſeſſor and uſeleſs to the public. Nothing can ſo effectually prevent this as activity, regular exerciſe, and frequent relaxations of the Mind from thoſe keen purſuits it is uſually engaged in.—Too aſſiduous an exertion of the Mind on any particular ſubject, not only ruins the health, but impairs the Genius itſelf; whereas, if the Mind be frequently unbent by amuſe-

amuſements, it always returns to its favourite object with double vigour.

But one of the principal misfortunes of a great Underſtanding, when exerted in a ſpeculative rather than in an active ſphere, is its tendency to lead the Mind into too deep a ſenſe of its own weakneſs and limited capacity. It looks into Nature with too piercing an eye, diſcovers every where difficulties imperceptible to a common Underſtanding, and find its progreſs ſtopt by obſtacles that appear inſurmountable. This naturally produces a gloomy and forlorn Scepticiſm, which poiſons the chearfulneſs of the temper, and, by the hopeleſs proſpect it gives of improvement, becomes the bane of ſcience and activity. This Sceptical Spirit, when carried into life, renders even Men of the beſt Underſtanding unfit for buſineſs. When they examine with the greateſt accuracy

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all the poſſible conſequences of a ſtep they are ready to make in life, they diſcover ſo many difficulties and chances againſt them, whichſoever way they turn, that they become ſlow and fluctuating in their reſolutions, and undetermined in their conduct. But as the buſineſs of life is in reality only a conjectural art, in which there is no guarding againſt all poſſible contingences, a Man that would be uſeful to the public or to himſelf, muſt be at once deciſive in his reſolutions, and ſteady and fearleſs in carrying them into execution.

We ſhall mention, in the laſt place, among the inconveniences attendant on ſuperior parts, that ſolitude in which they place a perſon on whom they are beſtowed, even in the midſt of ſociety.

Condemned in Buſineſs or in Arts to drudge,
Without a Second and without a Judge *.

* Pope.

To the few, who are judges of his abilities, he is an object of jealouſy and envy. The bulk of Mankind conſider him with that awe and diſtant regard that is incompatible with confidence and friendſhip. They will never unboſom themſelves to one they are afraid of, nor lay open their weakneſſes to one they think has none of his own. For this reaſon we commonly find that even Men of Genius have the greateſt real affection and friendſhip for ſuch as are very much their inferiors in point of Underſtanding; good-natured, unobſerving people, with whom they can indulge all their peculiarities and weakneſſes without reſerve. Men of great abilities therefore, who prefer the ſweets of ſocial life and private friendſhip to the vanity of being admired, ought carefully to conceal their ſuperiority, and bring themſelves down to the level of thoſe they

they converſe with. Nor muſt this ſeem to be the effect of a deſigned condeſcenſion; for that is peculiarly mortifying to human pride.

Thus we have endeavoured to point out the effects which the faculty of Reaſon, that boaſted characteriſtic and privilege of the Human Species, produces among thoſe who poſſeſs it in the moſt eminent degree: and, from the little influence it ſeems to have in promoting either public or private good, we are almoſt tempted to ſuſpect, that Providence deprives us of thoſe fruits we naturally expect from it, in order to preſerve a certain balance and equality among Mankind.—Certain it is that Virtue, Genius, Beauty, Wealth, Power, and every natural advantage one can be poſſeſſed of, are uſually mixed with ſome alloy, which diſappoints the fond hope of their raiſing the poſſeſſor to any uncommon

uncommon degree of eminence, and even in ſome meaſure brings him down to the common level of his Species.

The next diſtinguiſhing principle of Mankind, which was mentioned, is that which unites them into ſocieties, and attaches them to one another by ſympathy and affection. This principle is the ſource of the moſt heart-felt pleaſure which we ever taſte.

It does not appear to have any natural connection with the Underſtanding.—It was before obſerved that perſons of the beſt Underſtanding poſſeſſed it frequently in a very inferior degree to the reſt of Mankind; but it was at the ſame time mentioned that this did not proceed from leſs natural ſenſibility of heart, but from the Social Principle languiſhing for want of proper exerciſe. By its being more exerciſed among the idle and the diſſipated, perſons of this character ſome-

ſometimes derive more pleaſure from it; for not only their pleaſures but their vices are often of the ſocial kind; and hence the Social Principle is warm and vigorous among them. Even drinking, if not carried to exceſs, is found favourable to this principle, eſpecially in our northern climates, where the affections are naturally cold: as it produces an artificial warmth of temper, opens and enlarges the heart, and diſpels the reſerve, natural perhaps to wiſe Men, but inconſiſtent with connections of ſympathy and affection.

All thoſe warm and elevated deſcriptions of friendſhip, which ſo powerfully charm the Minds of young people, and repreſent it as the height of human felicity, are really romantic among us. When we look round us into life, we meet with nothing correſponding to them, except among an happy few in

the ſequeſtered ſcenes of life, far removed from the purſuits of intereſt or ambition. Theſe ſentiments of friendſhip are original and genuine productions of warmer and happier climes, and adopted by us merely out of vanity.—The ſame obſervation may be applied to the more delicate and intereſting attachment between the ſexes.—Many of our ſex, who, becauſe poſſeſſed of ſome learning, aſſume the tone of ſuperior wiſdom, treat this attachment with great ridicule, as a weakneſs below the dignity of a Man, and allow no kind of it but what we have in common with the whole Animal Creation. They acknowledge, that the fair ſex are uſeful to us, and a very few will deign to conſider ſome of them as reaſonable and agreeable companions. —But it may be queſtioned, whether this is not the language of an heart inſenſible to the moſt refined and exquiſite

ſite pleaſure Human Nature is capable of enjoying, or the language of diſappointed Pride, rather than of Wiſdom and Nature. No Man ever deſpiſed the ſex who was a favourite with them, nor did any one ever ſpeak contemptuouſly of love, who was conſcious of loving and being beloved by a Woman of merit. The attachment between the ſexes is a natural principle, which forms in an eminent degree the happineſs of Human Life in every part of the world. As the power of beauty in the Eaſtern countries is extremely abſolute, no other accompliſhments are thought neceſſary to the Women, but ſuch as are merely perſonal. They are cut off therefore, by the moſt cruel exertion of power, from all opportunities of improvement, and paſs their lives in a lonely and ignominious confinement; excluded from all free intercourſe with human ſociety. The caſe is very different in this climate

where the power of Beauty is very limited. Love with us is but a feeble paſſion, and generally yields eaſily to intereſt, ambition, or even to vanity, that paſſion of a little mind and a cold heart; as luxury therefore advances among us, love muſt be extinguiſhed among people of better rank altogether. To give it any force or permanency, we muſt connect it with ſentiment and eſteem. But it is not in our power to do this, if we treat Women as we do Children. If we impreſs their minds with a belief that they were only made to be domeſtic drudges, and the ſlaves of our pleaſures, we debaſe their minds, and deſtroy all generous emulation to excel; whereas, if we uſe them in a more liberal and generous manner; a decent pride, a conſcious dignity, and a ſenſe of their own worth, will naturally induce them to exert themſelves to be what they would wiſh to be thought,

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and are entitled to be, our companions and friends. This however they can never accompliſh by leaving their own natural characters and aſſuming ours. As the two ſexes have very different parts to act in life, Nature has marked their characters very differently; in a way that beſt qualifies them to fulfil their reſpective duties in ſociety. Nature intended us to protect the Women, to provide for them and their families. Our buſineſs is without doors. All the rougher and more laborious parts in the great ſcene of human affairs fall to our ſhare. In the courſe of theſe, we have occaſion for our greater bodily ſtrength, greater perſonal courage, and more enlarged powers of Underſtanding. The greateſt glory of Women lies in private and domeſtic life, as friends, wives, and mothers. It belongs to them, to regulate the whole œconomy of the family.

But a much more important charge is committed to them. The education of the youth of both ſexes principally devolves upon the Women, not only in their infancy, but during that period, in which the conſtitution both of body and mind, the temper and diſpoſitions of the heart, are in a great meaſure formed. They are deſigned to ſoften our hearts and poliſh our manners. The form of power and authority, to direct the affairs of public ſocieties and private families, remains indeed with us. But they have a natural defence againſt the abuſe of this power, by that ſoft and inſinuating addreſs, which enables them to controul it, and often to transfer it to themſelves.

In this view, the part which Women have to act in life, is important and reſpectable; and Nature has given them all the neceſſary requiſites to perform it.

They poſſeſs, in a degree greatly beyond us, ſenſibility of heart, ſweetneſs of temper, and gentleneſs of manners. They are more chearful and joyous. They have a quicker diſcernment of characters. They have a more lively fancy, and a greater delicacy of taſte and ſentiment; they are better judges of grace, elegance, and propriety, and therefore are our ſuperiors in ſuch works of taſte as depend on theſe. If we do not conſider Women in this honourable point of view, we muſt forego in a great meaſure the pleaſure ariſing from an intercourſe between the ſexes, and, together with this, the joys and endearments of domeſtic life. Beſides, in point of ſound policy, we ſhould either improve the Women or abridge their power; if we give them an important truſt, we ſhould qualify them for the proper diſcharge of it; if we give them liberty,

unhappy people? Why is their neighbouring nation, whom they deſpiſe for their ſhallowneſs and levity, yet awkwardly imitate in their moſt frivolous accompliſhments, happy in poverty and ſlavery? We are obliged to own the one poſſeſſes a native chearfulneſs and vivacity, beyond any other people upon earth; but ſtill much is owing to their cultivating with the greateſt care all the arts which enliven and captivate the imagination, ſoften the heart, and give ſociety its higheſt poliſh. In Britain we generally find Men of ſenſe and learning ſpeaking in a contemptuous manner of all writings addreſſed to the imagination and the heart, even of ſuch as exhibit genuine pictures of life and manners. But beſides the additional vigour, which theſe give to the powers of the imagination, and the influence they have in rendering the affections warmer and more lively,

lively, they are frequently of the greateſt ſervice in communicating a knowledge of the world: a knowledge the moſt important of all others, to one who is to live in it, and who would wiſh to act his part with propriety and dignity. Moral painting is undoubtedly the higheſt and moſt uſeful ſpecies of painting. The execution may be, and generally is, very wretched, and ſuch as has the worſt effects, in miſleading the judgment and debauching the heart: but, if this kind of writing continues to come into the hands of Men of Genius and worth, little room will be left for this complaint.

There is a remarkable difference between the Engliſh and French in their taſte of ſocial life. The Gentlemen in France, in all periods of life, and even in the moſt advanced age, never aſſociate with one another, but ſpend all the

the hours they can ſpare from buſineſs or ſtudy with the ladies; with the young, the gay, and the happy.—It is obſerved that the people of this rank in France live longer, and what is of much greater conſequence, live more happily, and enjoy their faculties of Body and Mind more entire, in old age, than any people in Europe. In Great Britain we have certain notions of propriety and decorum, which lead us to think the French manner of ſpending their hours of relaxation from buſineſs extremely ridiculous. But if we examine with due attention into theſe ſentiments of propriety, we ſhall not perhaps find them to be built on a very ſolid foundation. We believe that it is proper for perſons of the ſame age, of the ſame ſex, of ſimilar diſpoſitions and purſuits, to aſſociate together. But here we ſeem to be deceived by words. If we conſult nature

ture and common ſenſe, we ſhall find that the true propriety and harmony of ſocial life conſiſts in the aſſociation of people of different diſpoſitions and characters, judiciouſly blended together. Nature has made no individual, nor any claſs of people, independent of the reſt of their ſpecies, or ſufficient for their own happineſs. Each ſex, each character, each period of life, have their ſeveral advantages and diſadvantages; and that union is the happieſt and moſt proper, where wants are mutually ſupplied. The fair ſex ſhould naturally expect to gain, from our converſation, knowledge, wiſdom, and ſedateneſs; and they ſhould give us in exchange, humanity, politeneſs, chearfulneſs, taſte, and ſentiment. The levity, the raſhneſs, and the folly of early life, is tempered with the gravity, the caution, and the wiſdom of age; while the timidity, coldneſs

neſs of heart, and langour, incident to declining years, are ſupported and aſſiſted by the courage, the warmth, and the vivacity of youth.

Old people would find great advantage in aſſociating rather with the young than with thoſe of their own age.—Many cauſes contribute to deſtroy chearfulneſs in the decline of life, beſides the natural decay of youthful vivacity. The few ſurviving friends and companions are then dropping off apace; the gay proſpects, that ſwelled the imagination in more early and more happy days, are then vaniſhed, and, together with them, the open, generous, unſuſpicious temper, and that warm heart which dilated with benevolence to all Mankind. Theſe are ſucceeded by gloom, diſguſt, ſuſpicion, and all the ſelfiſh paſſions which ſour the temper and contract the heart. When old people aſſociate only with one another,

another, they mutually increaſe theſe unhappy diſpoſitions, by brooding over their diſappointments, the degeneracy of the times, and ſuch like chearleſs and uncomfortable ſubjects. The converſation of young people diſpels this gloom, and communicates a chearfulneſs, and ſomething elſe perhaps which we do not fully underſtand, of great conſequence to health and the prolongation of life. There is an univerſal principle of imitation among Mankind, which diſpoſes them to catch inſtantaneouſly, and without being conſcious of it, the reſemblance of any action or character that preſents itſelf. This diſpoſition we can often check by the force of Reaſon, or the aſſiſtance of oppoſite impreſſions; at other times, it is inſurmountable. We have numberleſs examples of this in the ſimilitude of character and manners induced by people living much together,

together, in the ſudden communications of terror, of melancholy, of joy, of the military ardor, when no cauſe can be aſſigned for thoſe emotions. The communication of nervous diſorders, eſpecially of the convulſive kind, is often ſo aſtoniſhing, that it has been referred to faſcination or witchcraft. We ſhall not pretend to explain the nature of this mental infection; but it is a fact well eſtabliſhed, that ſuch a thing exiſts, and that there is ſuch a principle in Nature as an healthy ſympathy, as well as a morbid infection.

An old Man, who enters into this philoſophy, is far from envying or proving a check on the innocent pleaſures of young people, and particularly of his own children. On the contrary, he attends with delight to the gradual opening of the imagination and the dawn of Reaſon; he enters by a ſecret ſort of ſympathy

ſympathy into their guiltleſs joys, that recall to his memory the tender images of his youth, which, by length of time, have contracted a * ſoftneſs inexpreſſibly agreeable; and thus the evening of life is protracted to an happy, honourable, and unenvied old age.

* Addiſon.

SECTION III.

THE advantages derived to Mankind from Taſte, by which we underſtand the improved uſe of the powers of the Imagination, are confined to a very ſmall number. Taſte implies not only a quickneſs and juſtneſs of intellectual diſcernment, but alſo a delicacy of feeling in regard to pleaſure or pain, conſequent upon a diſcernment of its proper object. The ſervile condition of the bulk of Mankind requires conſtant labour for their daily ſubſiſtence. This of neceſſity deprives them of the means of improving the

the powers either of Imagination or of Reaſon, except ſo far as their particular employments render ſuch an improvement neceſſary. Yet there is great reaſon to think the Men of this claſs the happieſt, at leaſt ſuch of them as are juſt above want. If they do not enjoy the pleaſures ariſing from the proper culture of the higher powers of their Nature, they are free from the miſery conſequent upon the abuſe of theſe powers. They are likewiſe in full poſſeſſion of one great ſource of human happineſs; which is good health and good ſpirits. Their Minds never languiſh for want of exerciſe or want of a purſuit, and therefore the tædium vitæ, the inſupportable liſtleſſneſs ariſing from the want of ſomething to wiſh or ſomething to fear, is to them unknown.

But even among thoſe to whom an eaſy fortune gives ſufficient leiſure and

opportunities for the improvement of Taſte, we find little attention given to it, and conſequently little pleaſure derived from it. Nature gives only the ſeeds of Taſte; culture muſt rear them, or they will never become a conſiderable ſource of pleaſure. The only powers of the Mind, that have been much cultivated in this Iſland, are thoſe of the Underſtanding. One unhappy conſequence of this has been to diſſolve the natural union between philoſophy and the fine arts; an union extremely neceſſary to their improvement. Hence Muſic, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, have been left in the hands of ignorant artiſts unaſſiſted by philoſophy, and even unacquainted with the works of great maſters.

The productions of purely natural Genius are ſometimes great and ſurpriſing, but are generally attended with a

wildneſs and luxuriancy inconſiſtent with juſt Taſte. It is the buſineſs of philoſophy to analyſe and aſcertain the principles of every art where Taſte is concerned; but this does not require a philoſopher to be maſter of the executive part of theſe arts, or to be an inventor in them. His buſineſs is to direct the exertion of Genius in ſuch a manner that its productions may attain to the utmoſt poſſible perfection.

It is but lately that any attempt was made among us to analyſe the principles of beauty, or of muſical expreſſion. And its having been made was entirely owing to the accident of two eminent artiſts, the one in Painting *, the other in Muſic †, having a philoſophical ſpirit, and applying it to their ſeveral profeſſions. Their being eminent maſters and performers, was undoubtedly

* Hogarth. † Aviſon.

of ſingular advantage to them in writing on theſe ſubjects, but was by no means ſo eſſential as is generally believed. Mr. Webb, who was no painter, has explained the principles of Taſte in painting with an accuracy and perſpicuity, which would have done honour to the greateſt maſter. He ſhews at the ſame time, that if we are wholly guided by the prejudice of names, we no longer truſt our own ſenſes; that we muſt acknowledge merit which we do not ſee, and undervalue that which we do; and that, diſtreſſed between authority and conviction, we become diſguſted with the difficulty of an art, which is perhaps of all others the moſt eaſily underſtood, becauſe it is the moſt direct and immediate addreſs to the ſenſes.

It is likewiſe but very lately that modern philoſophy has condeſcended

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to beſtow any attention on poetry or compoſition of any kind. The genuine ſpirit of criticiſm is but juſt beginning to exert itſelf. The conſequence has been, that all theſe arts have been under the abſolute dominion of faſhion and caprice, and therefore have not given that high and laſting pleaſure to the Mind, which they would have done, if they had been exerciſed in a way agreeable to Nature and juſt Taſte.

Thus in painting, the ſubject is very ſeldom ſuch as has any grateful influence on the Mind. The deſign and execution, as far as the mere painter is concerned, is often admirable, and the taſte of imitation is highly gratified; but the whole piece wants meaning and expreſſion, or what it has is trifling and often extremely diſagreeable. It is but ſeldom we ſee Nature painted in her moſt amiable or graceful forms, in a way

of ſingular advantage to them in writing on theſe ſubjects, but was by no means ſo eſſential as is generally believed. Mr. Webb, who was no painter, has explained the principles of Taſte in painting with an accuracy and perſpicuity, which would have done honour to the greateſt maſter. He ſhews at the ſame time, that if we are wholly guided by the prejudice of names, we no longer truſt our own ſenſes; that we muſt acknowledge merit which we do nōt ſee, and undervalue that which we do; and that, diſtreſſed between authority and conviction, we become diſguſted with the difficulty of an art, which is perhaps of all others the moſt eaſily underſtood, becauſe it is the moſt direct and immediate addreſs to the ſenſes.

It is likewiſe but very lately that modern philoſophy has condeſcended

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in the hands of practical Muſicians, and not under the direction of Taſte and Philoſophy: For, in order to give Muſic any extenſive influence over the Mind, the compoſer and performer muſt underſtand well the human heart, the various aſſociations of the paſſions, and the natural tranſitions from one to another, ſo as they may be able to command them, in conſequence of their ſkill in muſical expreſſion.

No Science ever flouriſhed, while it was confined to a ſet of Men who lived by it as a profeſſion. Such Men have purſuits very different from the end and deſign of their art. The intereſted views of a trade are widely different from the enlarged and liberal proſpects of Genius and Science. When the knowledge of an art is confined in this manner, every private practitioner muſt attend to the general principles of his craft, or ſtarve. If he goes out of the common path, he

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that may captivate the heart and make it better. On the contrary, we often find her in ſituations the moſt unpleaſing to the Mind, in old-age, deformity, diſeaſe, and idiotiſm. The Dutch and many of the Flemiſh commonly exhibit her in the loweſt and moſt debaſing attitudes: and in Italy the Genius of painting is frequently proſtituted to the purpoſes of the moſt deſpicable ſuperſtition. —Thus the mind is diſappointed in the pleaſure which this elegant art is ſo admirably fitted to convey; the agreeable effect of the imitation being counteracted and deſtroyed by the unhappy choice of the ſubject.

The influence of Muſic over the Mind is perhaps greater than that of any of the fine arts. It is capable of raiſing and ſoothing every paſſion and emotion of the Soul. Yet the real effects produced by it are inconſiderable. This is in a great meaſure owing to its being left in

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is in danger of becoming an object of the jealouſy and the abuſe of his brethren; and among the reſt of Mankind he can neither find judges nor patrons. This is particularly the caſe of the delightful art we are ſpeaking of, which has now become a Science ſcarcely underſtood by any but a few compoſers and performers. They alone direct the public Taſte, or rather dictate to the world what they ſhould admire and be moved with; and the vanity of moſt people makes them acquieſce in this aſſumed authority, leſt otherwiſe they ſhould be ſuſpected to want Taſte and knowledge in the ſubject. In the mean time, Men of ſenſe and candor, not finding that pleaſure in Muſic which they were made to expect, are above diſſembling, and give up all pretenſions to the leaſt knowledge in the Subject. They are even modeſt enough to aſcribe their inſenſi-

inſenſibility of the charms of Muſic to their want of a good ear, or a natural Taſte for it, and own that they find the Science ſo complicated, that they do not think it worth the trouble it muſt coſt them to acquire an artificial one. They reſolve to abandon an Art in which they deſpair of ever becoming ſuch proficients, as either to derive pleaſure from it themſelves, or to be able to communicate it to others, at leaſt without making that the ſerious buſineſs of Life, which ought only to be the amuſement of an idle or the ſolace of a melancholy hour. But before they entirely forego one of the moſt innocent amuſements in life, not to ſpeak of it in an higher ſtile, it would not be improper to enquire a little more particularly into the ſubject. We ſhall therefore here beg leave to examine ſome of the firſt principles of Taſte in Muſic with the utmoſt freedom.

Muſic

Muſic is the Science of ſounds, ſo far as they affect the Mind. Nature independent of cuſtom has connected certain ſounds or tones with certain feelings of the Mind. Meaſure and proportion in ſounds have likewiſe their foundation in nature. Thus certain tones are naturally adapted to ſolemn, plaintive, and mournful ſubjects, and the movement is ſlow; others are expreſſive of the joyous and elevating, and the movement is quick.—Sounds likewiſe affect the Mind, as they are loud or ſoft, rough or ſmooth, diſtinct from the conſideration of their gravity or acuteneſs. Thus in the Æolian harp the tones are pleaſant and ſoothing, though there is no ſucceſſion of notes varying in acuteneſs, but only in loudneſs. The effect of the common drum, in rouſing and elevating the Mind, is very ſtrong; yet it has no variety of notes; though the effect

effect indeed here depends much on the proportion and meaſure of the notes.

Melody conſiſts in the agreeable ſucceſſion of ſingle ſounds.—The melody that pleaſes in one country does not equally pleaſe in another, though there are certain general principles which univerſally regulate it, the ſcale of Muſic being the ſame in all countries.—Harmony conſiſts in the agreeable effect of ſounds differing in acuteneſs produced together; the general principles of it are likewiſe fixed.

One end of Muſic is merely to communicate pleaſure, by giving a ſlight and tranſient gratification to the Ear; but the far nobler and more important is to command the paſſions and move the heart. In the firſt view it is an innocent amuſement, well fitted to give an agreeable relaxation to the Mind from the fatigue of ſtudy or buſineſs.—In the

the other it is one of the moſt uſeful arts in life.

Muſic has always been an art of more real importance among uncultivated than among civilized nations. Among the former we always find it intimately connected with poetry and dancing, and it appears, by the teſtimony of many ancient * authors, that Muſic, in the original ſenſe of the word, comprehended melody, dance and ſong. By theſe almoſt all barbarous nations in every age, and in every climate, have expreſſed all ſtrong emotions of the Mind. By † theſe attractive and powerful arts they celebrate their public ſolemnities; by theſe they lament their private and public calamities, the death of friends or the loſs of warriors; by theſe united they expreſs their joy on their marriages, harveſts, huntings, vic-

* See Plato and Athenæus. † Brown.

tories;

tories; praiſe the great actions of their gods and heroes; excite each other to war and brave exploits, or to ſuffer death and torments with unſhaken conſtancy.

In the earlieſt periods of the Greek ſtates, their moſt ancient maxims, exhortations, and laws, and even their hiſtory, were written in verſe, their religious rites were accompanied by dance and ſong, and their earlieſt oracles were delivered in verſe, and ſung by the prieſt or prieſteſs of the ſuppoſed god. While melody, therefore, conjoined with poetry, continued to be the eſtabliſhed vehicle of all the leading principles of religion, morals, and polity, they became the natural and proper objects of public attention and regard, and bore a principal and eſſential part in the * education of Children. Hence we ſee

* Plutarchus de Muſica.

how

how Muſic among the ancient Greeks was eſteemed a neceſſary accompliſhment, and why an ignorance in this art was regarded as a capital defect. Thus Themiſtocles came to be reproached with his ignorance in * Muſic; and the many enormous crimes committed in the country of Cynethe were attributed by the neighbouring ſtates to the neglect of † Muſic; nor was the reproach thrown, in theſe days, upon ſuch as were ignorant of the art,, without a juſt foundation; becauſe this ignorance implied a general deficiency in the three great articles of education; religion, morals, and polity.

‡ Such was the enlarged Nature of ancient Muſic when applied to education, and not a mere proficiency in the

* Cicero.
† Athenæus, Polybius.
‡ See Plato de Legibus.

playing

playing or singing art, as has been very generally supposed. Most authors have been led into this mistake by Aristotle, who speaks of Music as an art distinct from Poetry. But the reason of this was, that in the time of Aristotle, a separation of the melody and song had taken place; the first retained the name of Music, and the second assumed that of Poetry.

In the most ancient times the character of a bard was of great dignity and importance, being usually united with that of legislator and chief magistrate. Even after the separation was first made, he continued for some time to be the second character in the community, as an assistant to the magistrate in governing the people *.

Such was the important and honourable state of Music, not only in ancient

* Suidas on the Lesbian Song. Hesiod.

Greece, but in the early periods of all civilized nations in every part of the world.

In all the Celtic nations, and particularly in Great Britain, the bards were anciently of the higheſt rank and eſtimation. The character of general, poet, and muſician, were united in Fingal and * Oſſian. The progreſs of Edward the firſt's arms was ſo much retarded by the influence of the Welſh bards, whoſe ſongs breathed the high ſpirit of liberty and war, that he baſely ordered them to be ſlain: an event that has given riſe to

* Such was the ſong of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thouſand bards leaned forward from their ſeats, to hear the voice of the king. It was like the Muſic of the harp on the gale of the ſpring. Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not Oſſian the ſtrength of thy ſoul? but thou ſtandeſt alone, my father; and who can equal the king of Morven? Carthon.

one

one of the moſt elegant and ſublime odes that any language has produced.

In proportion as the ſimplicity and purity of ancient manners declined in Greece, the ſiſter arts, which formerly uſed to be the handmaids of virtue, came by degrees to be proſtituted to the purpoſes of vice or of mere amuſement. A corruption of manners debaſed theſe arts, which, when once corrupted, became principal inſtruments in compleating the deſtruction of religion and virtue. Yet the ſame cauſe which turned them aſide from their original uſe, contributed to their improvement as particular arts. When Muſic, Dancing, and Poetry came to be conſidered as only ſubſervient to pleaſure, a higher degree of proficiency in them became neceſſary, and conſequently a more ſevere application to each. This compleated their ſeparation from one ano-

ther, and occaſioned their falling entirely into the hands of ſuch Men as devoted their whole time to their cultivation. Thus the complex character of legiſlator, poet, actor, and muſician, which formerly ſubſiſted in one perſon, came to be ſeparated into diſtinct profeſſions, and the unworthy purpoſes to which Muſic in particular came to be applied, made a * proficiency in it unſuitable to any Man of high rank and character.

Doctor Brown has treated this ſubject at full length, in a very learned diſſertation; where he has ſhewn with great ingenuity, and by the cleareſt deduction from facts, how melody, dance, and ſong, came in the progreſs of civilized ſociety, in different nations, to be cultivated ſeparately; and by what

* Ariſtot. Politic. Plutar. de Muſica.

means,

means, upon their total ſeparation, the power, the utility, and dignity of Muſic has ſunk into a general corruption and contempt.

The effect of eloquence depends in a great meaſure on Muſic. We take Muſic here in the large and proper ſenſe of the word; the art of variouſly affecting the Mind by the power of ſounds. In this ſenſe, all Mankind are more or leſs judges of it, without regard to exactneſs of ear. Every man feels the difference between a ſweet and melodious voice and a harſh diſſonant one.

Every agreeable ſpeaker independent of the ſweetneſs of his tones, riſes and falls in his voice in ſtrict muſical intervals, and therefore his diſcourſe is as capable of being ſet in muſical characters as any ſong whatever. But however muſical a voice may be, if the intervals which it uſes are uniformly the

ſame, it diſpleaſes, becauſe the ear is fatigued with the conſtant return of the ſame ſounds, however agreeable; and if we attend to the ſubject, we are diſpleaſed on another account, at hearing the ſame muſical paſſages made uſe of to expreſs and inſpire ſentiments of the moſt different and oppoſite natures; whereas the one ſhould be always varying and adapted to the other. This has juſtly brought great ridicule on what is called Singing a Diſcourſe, though what really offends is either the badneſs of the ſong, or its being tireſome for want of variety.

If we examine into the effects produced by eloquence in all ages, we muſt aſcribe them in a great degree to the power of ſounds. We allow, at the ſame time, that compoſition, action, the expreſſion of the countenance, and ſome other circumſtances, contribute

their ſhare, though a much ſmaller one. —The moſt pathetic compoſition may be pronounced in ſuch a manner, as to prevent its having the leaſt influence. Orations which have commanded the Minds of the greateſt Men, and determined the fate of nations, have been read in the cloſet with languor and diſguſt.

As the proper application of the voice to the purpoſes of eloquence has been little attended to, it has been thought an art unattainable by any rules, and depending entirely on natural Taſte and Genius. This is in ſome meaſure true; yet it is much more reducible to rules, and more capable of being taught; than is commonly imagined. Indeed, before philoſophy aſcertains and methodizes the ideas and principles on which an art depends, it is no wonder it be difficult of acquiſition. The very language in which it

is to be communicated, is to be formed; and it is a conſiderable time before this language comes to be underſtood and adopted.—We have a remarkable inſtance of this in the ſubject of muſical expreſſion, or performing a piece of Muſic with Taſte and propriety. People were ſenſible, that the ſame Muſic performed by different artiſts had very different effects. Yet they all played the ſame notes, and played equally well in tune and in time. But ſtill there was an unknown ſomewhat, that gave it meaning and expreſſion from one hand, while from another it was lifeleſs and inſipid. People were ſatisfied in reſolving this into performing with or without Taſte, which was thought the entire gift of Nature.—Geminiani, who was both a compoſer and performer of the higheſt claſs, firſt thought of reducing the art of playing on the Violin

lin with Taſte to rules, for which purpoſe he was obliged to make a great addition to the muſical language and characters. The ſcheme was executed with great ingenuity, but has not met with the attention it deſerved.

Muſic, like Eloquence, muſt propoſe as its end a certain effect to be produced on the hearers. If it produces this effect it is good Muſic; if it fails, it is bad.—No Muſic can be pronounced good or bad in itſelf; it can only be relatively ſo. Every country has a melody peculiar to itſelf, expreſſive of the ſeveral paſſions. A compoſer muſt have a particular regard to this, if he propoſes to affect them.—Thus in Scotland there is a chearful Muſic perfectly well fitted to inſpire that joyous mirth ſuited to dancing, and a plaintive Muſic peculiarly expreſſive of that tenderneſs and pleaſing melancholy attendant on diſtreſs

diſtreſs in love; both original in their kind, and different from every other in Europe *. It is of no conſequence whence

* There is a ſimplicity, a delicacy, and pathetic expreſſion in the Scotch airs, which have always made them admired by people of genuine Taſte in Muſic. It is a general opinion that many of them were compoſed by David Rizzio: but this appears very improbable. There is a peculiarity in the ſtile of the Scotch melody, which foreigners, even ſome of great knowledge in Muſic, who reſided long in Scotland, have often attempted to imitate, but never with ſucceſs. It is not therefore probable, that a ſtranger, in the decline of life, who reſided only three or four years in Scotland, ſhould enter ſo perfectly into the Taſte of the national Muſic, as to compoſe airs, which the niceſt judges cannot diſtinguiſh from thoſe which are certainly known to be of much greater antiquity than Rizzio's. The tradition on this ſubject is very vague, and there is no ſhadow of authority to aſcribe any one particular Scotch air to Rizzio. If he had compoſed

whence this Muſic derives its origin, whether it be ſimple or complex, agreeable to the rules of regular compoſition, or againſt them; whilſt it produces its intended effect, in a ſuperior degree to any other, it is the preferable Muſic; and while a perſon feels this effect, it is a reflection on his Taſte and common ſenſe, if not on his candor, to deſpiſe it. The Scotch will in all probability ſoon loſe this native Muſic, the ſource

compoſed any Muſic while he was in Scotland it is highly probable it would have partaken of the genius of that melody, to which he had been accuſtomed; but the ſtile of the Scotch and Italian airs, in Rizzio's time, bear not the leaſt reſemblance to one another. Perhaps he might have moulded ſome of the Scotch airs into a more regular form; but if he did, it was probably no real improvement; as the wildeſt of them, which bid defiance to all rules of modern compoſition, are generally the moſt powerfully affecting.

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of ſo much pleaſure to their anceſtors, without acquiring any other in its place. Moſt muſical people in Scotland either neglect it altogether, or deſtroy that ſimplicity in its performance, on which its effects ſo entirely depended, by a fantaſtical and abſurd addition of Graces foreign to the genius of its Melody. The contempt ſhewn for the Scotch Muſic in its primitive and pathetic ſimplicity, by thoſe who, from a ſuperior ſkill in the ſcience, are thought entitled to lead the public Taſte, has nearly brought it into univerſal diſcredit. Such is the tyranny of Faſhion, and ſuch are the effects of that Vanity, which determines us, in obedience to its dictates, to reſign any pleaſure, and to ſubmit to almoſt any pain.

They who apply much of their time to Muſic, acquire new Taſtes, beſides their national one, and, in the infinite variety

variety which melody and harmony are capable of, diſcover new ſources of pleaſure formerly unknown to them. But the fineſt natural Taſte never adopts a new one, till the ear has been long accuſtomed to it; and, after all, ſeldom enters into it with that warmth and feeling, which thoſe do to whom it is national.

The general admiration pretended to be given to foreign Muſic in Britain, is in general deſpicable affectation. In Italy we ſometimes ſee the natives tranſported at the opera, with all that variety of delight and paſſion which the compoſer intended to produce. The ſame opera in England is ſeen with the moſt remarkable liſtleſſneſs and inattention. It can raiſe no paſſion in the audience becauſe they do not underſtand the language in which it is written. To them it has as little meaning as a piece

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of inſtrumental Muſic. The ear may be tranſiently pleaſed with the air of a ſong; but that is the moſt trifling effect of Muſic. Among the very few who underſtand the language, and enter with pleaſure and taſte into the Italian Muſic, the conduct of the dramatic part appears ſo ridiculous, that they can feel nothing of that tranſport of paſſion, the united effect of Muſic and Poetry, which may be gradually raiſed by the artful texture and unfolding of a dramatic ſtory *.—Yet vanity prevails ſo much over the ſenſe of pleaſure itſelf, that the Italian opera is in England more frequented by people of rank, than any other public diverſion; and, to avoid the imputation of want of Taſte, they condemn themſelves to ſome hours painful attendance on it every week, and pretend to talk of it in raptures, to

* Brown.

which

which their hearts will ever remain ſtrangers.

Nothing can afford ſo convincing a proof of the abſolute incapacity of our modern Muſic, to produce any laſting effect on the paſſions of Mankind, as the obſervation of the effects produced by an opera on people of the greateſt knowledge and Taſte in Muſic, as well as on thoſe who are moſt ignorant of the ſcience. An affecting ſtory may be wrought up, by the genius of a Metaſtaſio, in a manner that ſhould make it be read with the higheſt delight and emotion by every perſon of Taſte and Senſibility. We ſhould naturally ſuppoſe that the addition of Muſic ought to communicate greater energy to the compoſition; but, inſtead of this, it totally annihilates it. Many people may return home from an opera with their ears highly gratified by ſome particular ſongs,

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or paſſages of ſongs; but never one returned affected with the cataſtrophe of the piece, or with the heart-felt emotion produced by Othello or King Lear.

Simplicity in melody is abſolutely neceſſary in all Muſic intended to reach the heart, or even greatly to delight the ear. The effect here muſt be produced inſtantaneouſly, or not at all. The ſubject of the Muſic muſt therefore be ſimple, and eaſily traced; and not a ſingle note or grace ſhould be admitted, but what has a tendency to the propoſed end. —If ſimplicity of melody be ſo neceſſary, where the intention is to move the paſſions, ſimplicity of harmony, which ought always to be ſubſervient to it, muſt be ſtill more neceſſary. Some of the moſt delicate touches of pathetic Muſic will not allow any accompanyment.

The ancient Muſic certainly produced much

much greater and more general effects than the modern, though we ſhould allow the accounts we have of it to be much exaggerated. Yet the ſcience of Muſic was in a very low ſtate among the Ancients. They were probably ſtrangers to harmony, at leaſt if they knew it they neglected it, all the voices and inſtruments being uniſons in concert; and the inſtruments they made uſe of, appear to have been much inferior, in reſpect of compaſs, expreſſion, and variety, to thoſe which we are poſſeſſed of. Yet theſe very deficiencies might render their Muſic more expreſſive and powerful. The only view of compoſers was to touch the heart and the paſſions. Simple melody was ſufficient for this purpoſe, which might eaſily be comprehended and felt by the whole people. There were not two different ſpecies of Muſic among them, as with

us, one for the learned in the ſcience, and another for the vulgar.

* Although we are ignorant of the particular conſtruction of the ancient Muſic, yet we know it muſt have been altogether ſimple; ſuch as ſtateſmen, warriors, and bards, occupied in other purſuits, could compoſe, and ſuch as people of all ranks, children, and men buſied in other concerns of life, could learn and practiſe. We are likewiſe ſtrangers to the particular ſtructure of their inſtruments, but we have the greateſt reaſon to believe they were extremely ſimple. The chords of the lyre were originally but four †. They were afterwards increaſed to ſeven, at which number they were fixed by the laws of Sparta ‡, and Timotheus was baniſhed

* Brown. † Pauſanias.

‡ The art of Muſic had formerly been fixed and made unalterable in Crete and Egypt. Plato de legibus.

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for adding four additional ſtrings; but we are uncertain of the intervals by which the ſtrings of the lyre aſcended. Thoſe who regard only the advancement of Muſic as a ſcience, treat the laws of Sparta upon this ſubect with great ridicule; but they who conſider it as an art intimately connected with the whole fabric of its religion, morals, and policy, will view them in a very different light, and ſee the neceſſity of preſerving their Muſic in the utmoſt degree of ſimplicity. In fact, when the lyre, in proceſs of time, acquired forty ſtrings, when Muſic came to be a complicated art, and to be ſeparately cultivated by thoſe who gave up their whole time to its improvement, its nobleſt end and aim was loſt. In * Plutarch's time it was ſunk into a mere amuſement of the theatre. The ſame cauſes have produced the ſame

* De Muſica.

effects in modern times. In proportion as Muſic has become more artificial, and more difficult in the execution, it has loſt of its power and influence.

It was formerly obſerved, that the power of the ancient melody depended much on its union with Poetry. There are other circumſtances which might contribute to this power. The different paſſions naturally expreſs themſelves by different ſounds; but this expreſſion ſeems capable of a conſiderable latitude, and may be much altered by early aſſociation and habit. When particular ſounds and a certain ſtrain of melody are impreſſed upon young minds, in a uniform connexion with certain paſſions expreſſed in a ſong, this regular aſſociation raiſes theſe ſounds, in progreſs of time, into a kind of natural and expreſſive language of the paſſions. * Melody

* Brown.

therefore

therefore is to be conſidered, in a certain degree, as a relative thing, founded in the particular aſſociations and habits of different people; and, by cuſtom, like language, annexed to their ſentiments and paſſions. We generally hear with pleaſure the Muſic we have been accuſtomed to in our youth, becauſe it awakes the memory of our guiltleſs and happy days. We are even ſometimes wonderfully affected with airs, that neither appear, to ourſelves nor to others, to have any peculiar expreſſion. The reaſon is, we have firſt heard theſe airs at a time when our minds were ſo deeply affected by ſome paſſion, as to give a tincture to every object that preſented itſelf at the ſame time; and though the paſſion and the cauſe of it are entirely forgot, yet an object that has once been connected with them, will often awake the emotion, though it cannot recall

to remembrance the original cauſe of it.

* Similar aſſociations are formed, by the appropriations, in a great meaſure accidental, which different nations have given to particular muſical inſtruments, as bells, drums, trumpets, and organs; in conſequence of which they excite ideas and paſſions in ſome people which they do not in others. No Engliſhman can annex warlike ideas to the ſound of a bagpipe.

We have endeavoured to explain ſome of the cauſes which gave ſuch energy to the ancient Muſic, and which ſtill endear the melody of every country to its own inhabitants: Perhaps, for the reaſons mentioned above, if we were to recover the Muſic, which once had ſo much power in the early periods of the Greek ſtates, it might have no

* Brown.

ſuch

ſuch charms for modern ears, as ſome great admirers of antiquity imagine. Inſtrumental Muſic indeed, unaccompanied with dance and ſong, was never held in eſteem till the later periods of antiquity; in which a general ſeparation of theſe arts took place. * Plato calls inſtrumental Muſic an unmeaning thing, and an abuſe of melody.

There is another cauſe, which might probably contribute to make the ancient Muſic more powerfully expreſſive. In the infant ſtate of ſocieties, † Men's feelings and paſſions are ſtrong, becauſe they are never diſguiſed nor reſtrained; their imaginations are warm and luxuriant, from never having ſuffered any check. This diſpoſes them to that en-

* De legibus.

† This ſubject is treated with great accuracy and judgment by Dr. Blair, in his elegant Diſſertation on the poems of Oſſian.

thuſiaſm ſo favourable to Poetry and Muſic. The effuſions of Genius among ſuch a people may often poſſeſs the moſt pathetic ſublimity and ſimplicity of ſtile, though greatly deficient in point of elegance and regularity. And it is to be obſerved, that theſe laſt qualities are more peculiarly requiſite in ſome of the other fine arts, than they are in that ſpecies of Muſic which is deſigned to affect the paſſions, where too much ornament is always hurtful; and in place of promoting, is much more likely to defeat the deſired effect *. The tranquillity too

* Simplicity and conciſeneſs are never-failing characteriſtics of the ſtile of a ſublime writer. He reſts on the majeſty of his ſentiments; not on the pomp of his expreſſions. The main ſecret of being ſublime, is to ſay great things in few and plain words: for every ſuperfluous decoration degrades a ſublime idea. The mind riſes and ſwells, when a lofty deſcription or ſentiment

too of rural life, and the variety of images with which it fills the imagination, have as beneficial an influence upon Genius, as they have upon the diſpoſitions of the heart. The country, and particularly the paſtoral countries, are the favourite receſſes of Poetry and Muſic.

The introduction of harmony opened a new world in Muſic. It promiſed to give that variety which melody alone could never afford, and likewiſe to give

ment is preſented to it in its native form. But no ſooner does the poet attempt to ſpread out this ſentiment or deſcription, and to dreſs it round and round with glittering ornaments, than the mind begins to fall from its high elevation; the tranſport is over; the beautiful may remain, but the ſublime is gone. *Dr. Blair's Critical Diſſertation on the poems of Oſſian.*

The application of theſe ingenious obſervations to Muſic is too obvious to need any illuſtration.

melody

melody an additional charm and energy. Unfortunately the firſt compoſers were ſo immerſed in the ſtudy of harmony, which ſoon appeared to be a ſcience of great extent and intricacy, that theſe principal ends of it were forgot. They valued themſelves on the laboured conſtruction of parts, which were multiplied in a ſurpriſing manner.—In fact, this art of counterpoint and complicated harmony, invented by Guido in the eleventh century, was brought to its higheſt degree of perfection by Palæſtrini, who lived in the time of Leo X. But this ſpecies of Muſic could only be underſtood by the few who had made it their particular ſtudy. To every one elſe it appeared a confuſed jargon of ſounds without deſign or meaning. To the very few who underſtood it there appeared an evident deficiency in air or melody, eſpecially when the parts were made to

run in ſtrict fugues or canons, with which air is in a great meaſure incompatible.—Beſides the real deficiency of air in theſe compoſitions, it required the attention to be conſtantly exerted to trace the ſubject of the Muſic, as it was alternately carried on through the ſeveral parts; an attention inconſiſtent with what delights the ear, much more with what touches the paſſions; where this is the deſign of the Compoſer, the mind muſt be totally diſengaged, muſt ſee no contrivance, admire no execution; but be open and paſſive to the intended impreſſion.

We muſt however acknowledge, that there was often a Gravity, a Majeſty, and Solemnity, in theſe old full Compoſitions, admirably ſuited for the public ſervices of the Church. Although perhaps leſs fitted to excite particular paſſions, yet they tended to ſooth the

mind

mind into a tranquillity that diſengaged it from all earthly cares and pleaſures, and at the ſame time diſpoſed it to that peculiar elevation which raiſes the ſoul to Heaven, eſpecially when accompanied by the ſweet and ſolemn notes of the Organ.

The artifice of fugues in vocal Muſic ſeems in a peculiar manner ill adapted to affect the paſſions. If every one of four voices is expreſſing a different ſentiment and a different muſical paſſage at the ſame time, the hearer cannot poſſibly attend to, and be affected by them all. —This is a ſtile of compoſition in which a perſon, without the leaſt Taſte or Genius, may become a conſiderable proficient, by the mere force of ſtudy: But without a very great ſhare of theſe, to give ſpirit and meaning to the leading airs or ſubjects, ſuch compoſitions will always be dry and unaffecting. Catches, indeed,

indeed, are a ſpecies of fugues, highly productive of mirth and jollity; but the pleaſure we receive from theſe ſeldom ariſes either from the melody itſelf, or from its being peculiarly expreſſive of the ſubject. It ariſes principally from the droll and unexpected aſſemblage of words from the different parts, and from the ſpirit and humour with which they are ſung.

Beſides the objections that lie againſt all complex Muſic with reſpect to its compoſition, there are others ariſing from the great difficulty of its execution. It is not eaſy to preſerve a number of inſtruments, playing together, in tune. Stringed inſtruments are falling, while wind inſtruments naturally riſe in their tone during the performance. It is not even ſufficient that all the performers play in the moſt exact tune and time. They muſt all underſtand the ſtile and

deſign

deſign of the compoſition, and be able to make the reſponſes in the fugue with proper ſpirit. Every one muſt know how to carry on the ſubject with the proper expreſſion, when it is his turn to lead; and when he falls into an auxiliary part, he muſt know how to conduct his accompanyment in ſuch a manner as to give an additional force to the leading ſubject. But muſical taſte and judgment are moſt remarkably diſplayed in the proper accompanying of vocal Muſic, eſpecially with the thorough baſs. If this is not conducted with the ſtricteſt attention to heighten the intended expreſſion of the ſong, it deſtroys it altogether, as frequently happens from the throwing in the full chords, when a ſingle note ſhould only have been ſtruck, or when perhaps the accompanyment ſhould have ceaſed altogether.

Theſe are difficulties few performers have

have an idea of, and fewer are able to conquer. Moſt of them think they ſufficiently acquit themſelves, if they play in tune and in time: and vanity often leads them to make their voice or inſtrument to be heard above the reſt, without paying the leaſt regard to the deſign of the Compoſer.

It has been much the faſhion, for ſome years paſt, to regard air alone in muſical compoſitions; and the full and regular works of harmony have fallen into neglect, being conſidered as cold and ſpiritleſs. This change has been introduced by compoſers, who unfortunately happened to be great performers themſelves. Theſe people had no opportunities, in the old compoſitions, of ſhewing the dexterity of their execution; the wild and extravagant flights which they indulged, in order to diſplay this, being abſolutely deſtructive of the harmony.

mony. They introduced therefore Solo's of their own compoſition, or Concerto's which from the thinneſs and meagreneſs of the parts, cannot be conſidered in any other light than Solo's.—It is not eaſy to characteriſe the ſtile of moſt of theſe pieces. In truth they have no character or meaning at all. The authors of them are little concerned what ſubject they chooſe, their ſingle view being to excite the ſurpriſe and admiration of their hearers. This they do by the moſt unnatural and wild excurſions, that have not the remoteſt tendency to charm the ear or touch the heart. In many paſſages they are grating to the ear, when performed by the beſt hands, but when executed by ordinary performers, they are perfectly intolerable. Theſe compoſitions therefore want the merit which full harmony poſſeſſes, and are deficient in that ſimplicity, ſpirit, and

and elegance, which alone can recommend melody.

The preſent mode is to admire a new noiſy ſtile of compoſition, lately cultivated in Germany, and to deſpiſe Corelli as wanting ſpirit and variety. The truth is, Corelli's ſtile and this will not bear a compariſon. Corelli's excellence conſiſts in the chaſtity of his compoſition, and in the richneſs and ſweetneſs of his harmonies. The other ſometimes pleaſes by its ſpirit and a wild luxuriancy, which makes an agreeable variety in a concert, but poſſeſſes too little of the elegance and pathetic expreſſion of Muſic to remain long the public Taſte. The great merit of that nobleman's compoſitions, who firſt introduced this ſpecies of Muſic into this country, and his own ſpirited performance of them, firſt ſeduced the public ear. They are certainly much ſuperior to any of the

kind we have yet heard; though, by the delicacy of the airs in his ſlow movements, he diſplays a Genius capable of ſhining in a much ſuperior ſtile of Muſic.

Though Muſic, conſidered in its uſeful application, to delight the ear and touch the paſſions of the bulk of Mankind, requires the utmoſt ſimplicity, yet, conſidered as an art, capable of giving a laſting and varied pleaſure to the few, who from a ſtronger natural Taſte devote part of their time and attention to its cultivation, it both admits, and requires variety, and even ſome degree of complication.—Not only the ear but the muſical Taſte becomes more delicate by cultivation.

When the ear becomes acquainted with a variety of melodies, it begins by degrees to reliſh others, beſides thoſe which are national. A national melody

may have expreſſions for only a few affections. A cultivated and enlarged Taſte eaſily adopts a greater variety of expreſſions for theſe and other affections, and learns, from the deepeſt receſſes of harmony, to expreſs ſome that have never been excited by any national Muſic.

When one practiſes Muſic much, the ſimplicity of melody tires the ear. When he begins to hear an air he was formerly acquainted with, he immediately recollects the whole, and this anticipation often prevents his enjoying it. He requires therefore the aſſiſtance of harmony, which, without hurting the melody, gives a variety to the Muſic, and ſometimes renders the melody more expreſſive.—Practice enables one to trace the ſubject of a complex Concerto, as it is carried through the ſeveral parts, which to a common ear is an unmeaning jum-

ble of ſounds. Diſtinct from the pleaſure which the ear receives here from the Muſic, there is another, which ariſes from the perception of the contrivance and ingenuity of the compoſer.—This enjoyment, it muſt be owned, is not of that heart-felt ſort which ſimple Muſic alone can give, but of a more ſober and ſedate kind, which proves of longer duration: And it muſt be conſidered, that whatever touches the heart or the paſſions very ſenſibly, muſt be applied with a judicious and very ſparing hand. —The ſweeteſt and fulleſt chords muſt be ſeldom repeated, otherwiſe the certain effect is ſatiety and diſguſt.—They who are beſt acquainted with the human heart, need not be told that this obſervation is not confined to Muſic.

On the whole we may obſerve, that muſical Genius conſiſts in the invention of Melody ſuited to produce a deſired

effect

effect on the mind.—Muſical Taſte conſiſts in conducting the melody with ſpirit and elegance, in ſuch a manner as to produce this ſingle effect in its full force.

Judgment in Muſic is ſhewn in the contrivance of ſuch harmonious accompanyments to the melody as may give it an additional energy, and a variety, without deſtroying its ſimplicity; in the preparation and reſolution of diſcords; and in the artful tranſitions from one key to another.—Taſte in a performer conſiſts in a knowledge of the compoſer's deſign, and expreſſing it in a ſpirited and pathetic manner, without any view of ſhewing the dexterity of his own execution.

But though all theſe circumſtances of compoſition and performance ſhould concur in any piece of Muſic, yet it muſt always fail in affecting the paſſions,

unleſs its meaning and direction be aſcertained by adapting it to ſentiment and pathetic compoſition.

It exerts its greateſt powers when uſed as an aſſiſtant to Poetry: hence the great ſuperiority of vocal to inſtrumental Muſic, the human voice being capable of more juſtneſs, and at the ſame time of a more delicate muſical expreſſion, than any inſtrument whatever; the perfection of an inſtrument depending on its neareſt approach to it. Vocal Muſic is much confined by the language it is performed in. The harmony and ſweetneſs of the Greek and Italian languages give them great advantages over the Engliſh and French, which are harſh, unmuſical, and full of conſonants; and this, among other inconveniences, occaſions perpetual ſacrifices of the quantity to the modulation *. This

* Rouſſeau.

is

is one great cauſe of the ſlightneſs and want of variety of the French Muſic, which they in vain endeavour to cover and ſupply by laboured and complex accompanyments.

As vocal Muſic is the firſt and moſt natural Muſic of every country, it is reaſonable to expect it to bear ſome analogy to the Poetry of the country, to which it is always adapted.—The remarkable ſuperiority of the Scotch ſongs to the Engliſh, may in a great meaſure be accounted for from this principle. The Scotch ſongs are ſimple and tender, full of ſtrokes of Nature and Paſſion. So is their Muſic. Many of the Engliſh ſongs abound in quaint and childiſh conceits. They all aim at wit, and ſometimes attain it; but Muſic has no expreſſion for wit, and the Muſic of their ſongs is therefore flat and inſipid, and ſo little eſteemed by the Engliſh

themſelves, that it is in a perpetual fluctuation, and has never had any characteriſtic ſtile *.

On the other hand, England has produced many admirable compoſers of Church Muſic. Their great attachment to Counterpoint hath indeed often led them into a wrong track; in other reſpects, they have ſhewn both Genius and Taſte.—Religion opens the ampleſt field for muſical, as well as poetical Genius; it affords almoſt all the variety of

* Dr. Brown very ingeniouſly obſerves, that moſt countries peopled by colonies, which, after a certain period of civilization, have iſſued from their native ſoil, poſſeſs no characteriſtic Muſic of their own; that the Iriſh, Welſh, and Scotch are ſtrictly natives, and accordingly have a Muſic of their own; that the Engliſh, on the contrary, are a foreign mixture of late-eſtabliſhed colonies, and, as a conſequence of this, have no native Muſic; and that the original Muſic of England muſt be ſought for in Wales.

ſubjects, which Muſic can expreſs; the ſublime, the joyous, the chearful, the ſerene, the devout, the plaintive, the ſorrowful. It likewiſe warms the heart with that enthuſiaſm ſo peculiarly neceſſary in all works of Genius. Accordingly our fineſt compoſitions in Muſic, are in the Church ſtile. Handel, far advanced in life, when his conſtitution and ſpirits ſeemed nearly exhauſted, was ſo rouſed by this ſubject, that he exhibited proofs of extent and ſublimity of Genius in his Meſſiah, ſuperior to any he had ſhewn in his moſt vigorous period of life. We have another inſtance of the ſame kind in Marcello, a noble Venetian, who ſet the firſt fifty Pſalms to Muſic. In this work he has united the ſimplicity and pathos of the ancient Muſic with the grace and variety of the modern. In compliance with the Taſte of the times he was ſometimes forced to leave

leave that ſimplicity of ſtile which he loved and admired, but by doing ſo he has enriched the art with a variety of the moſt expreſſive and unuſual harmonies.

The great object in vocal Muſic is to make the Muſic expreſſive of the ſentiment. How little this is uſually regarded appears by the practice of ſinging all the parts of a ſong to the ſame Muſic, though the ſentiments and paſſions to be expreſſed be ever ſo different. If the Muſic has any character at all, this is a manifeſt violation of Taſte and common ſenſe, as it is obvious every different ſentiment and paſſion ſhould be expreſſed in a ſtile peculiarly ſuited to itſelf.

But the moſt common blunder in compoſers who aim at expreſſion, is their miſtaking imitation for it.—

* Muſic, conſidered as an imitative

* See Harris and Aviſon.

art,

art, can imitate only ſounds or motion, and this laſt but very imperfectly. A compoſer ſhould make his Muſic expreſſive of the ſentiment, and never have a reference to any particular word uſed in conveying that ſentiment, which is a common practice, and really a miſerable ſpecies of punning. Beſides, where imitation is intended, it ſhould generally be laid upon the inſtrumental accompanyments, which by their greater compaſs and variety are fitter to perform the imitation, while the voice is left at liberty to expreſs the ſentiment. When the imitation is laid upon the voice, it obliges it to a ſtrained and unnatural exertion, and prevents the diſtinct articulation of the words, which it is neceſſary to preſerve, in order to convey the meaning of the ſong.—Handel ſometimes obſerved this very carefully, at other times, as his Genius or attention

was

was very unequal, he entirely neglected it. In that beautiful ſong of the Il Penſeroſo,

" Oft on a plat of riſing ground,
" I hear the far-off curfew ſound,"

he has thrown the imitation of the bell, with great art and ſucceſs, into the ſymphony, and reſerves the ſong entire for the expreſſion of that pleaſing tranquil melancholy, which the words ſo emphatically convey. He has ſhewn the ſame addreſs in the celebrated ſong of Acis and Galatea,

" Huſh, ye little warbling quire,"

where he has laid the imitation of the warbling of the birds upon the ſymphony and accompanyments, and preſerves in the ſong that ſimplicity and languiſhing tenderneſs, which the ſubject of it particularly required.—On the other hand, in the ſong in Semele,

" The

"The morning lark to mine accords his note,
"And tunes to my diſtreſs his warbling throat,"

he runs a long and laboured diviſion on the word Warbling; and after all, the voice gives but a very faint imitation of the warbling of the lark, though the violins in the ſymphony could have expreſſed it with great juſtneſs and delicacy.

In the union of Poetry and Muſic, the Muſic ſhould be ſubſervient to the Poetry: the very reverſe is the common practice; the Poetry is ever made ſubordinate to the Muſic. Handel made thoſe who compoſed the words of his Oratorios, alter and tranſpoſe them, as he thought beſt ſuited his Muſic; and as no Man of Genius could ſubmit to this, we generally find the Poetry the moſt wretched imaginable.

We have frequently a more ſhocking inſtance of the little regard the compoſer

poſer has to the Poetry, and to the effect which ſhould be left upon the Mind, in the unmeaning repetition of the firſt part of the Muſic after the ſecond. It frequently happens, that a ſucceſſion of very oppoſite paſſions takes place in the courſe of a ſong; for inſtance, from anger to reconciliation and tenderneſs, with which the ſenſe requires it ſhould conclude; yet the compoſer ſometimes conſtructs his Muſic in ſuch a way, as requires a return from the ſecond to the firſt part with which the ſong muſt end. This is not only a glaring abſurdity in point of ſenſe, but diſtracts the Mind by a moſt unnatural ſucceſſion of paſſions.—

We have another inſtance of the little regard paid to the ultimate end of Muſic, the affecting the heart and paſſions, in the univerſally allowed practice of making a long flouriſh or cadence at the

the cloſe of a ſong, and ſometimes at other periods of it. In this the performer is left at liberty to ſhew the utmoſt compaſs of his throat and execution; and all that is required, is, that he ſhould conclude in the proper key; the performer accordingly takes this opportunity of ſhewing the audience the extent of his abilities, by the moſt fantaſtical and unmeaning extravagance of execution. The diſguſt which this gives to ſome, and the ſurprize which it excites in all the audience, breaks the tide of paſſion in the ſoul, and deſtroys all the effects which the compoſer has been ſtraining to produce.

It may be obſerved, that the loud applauſe ſo frequently given to pieces of Muſic, ſeldom implies any compliment either to the compoſition itſelf, or to the performer's juſt execution of it.

It

It only expreſſes our admiration of the performer's fine ſhake, or ſwelling of a note, his power of protracting a note twice as long as another could do without loſing his breath entirely, or of the variety of his cadence running out into the moſt extraneous modulation, and then artfully conducted to a proper concluſion in the key. But all theſe feats of art, the better they are executed, and the greater ſurprize they excite, the more effectually do they deſtroy the impreſſion of the preceding Muſic, if it was ever capable of producing any. They are in general as little eſſential to good Muſic, as the tricks of a Harlequin are to that gracefulneſs, elegance, and dignity of movement, which conſtitute the perfection of dancing. The genuine applauſe beſtowed on Muſic is to be ſought for in

the profound ſilence, in the emphatic looks, and in the tears of the audience.

Our Oratorios labour under two diſadvantages; their being deprived of action and ſcenery; and their having no unity or deſign as a whole. They are little elſe than a collection of ſongs pretty much independent of one another. Now the effect of a dramatic performance does not depend on the effect of particular paſſages, conſidered by themſelves, but on that artful conſtruction, by which one part gives ſtrength to another, and gradually works the Mind up to thoſe ſentiments and paſſions, which it was the deſign of the author to produce.

The effects of Muſic depend upon many other circumſtances beſides its connexion with Poetry. The effect, for inſtance, of Cathedral Muſic depends greatly on its being properly

adapted to the particular ſervice of the day, and diſcourſe of the preacher; and ſuch a direction of it requires great taſte and judgment. Yet this is never attended to: the whole conduct of it is left to the caprice of the organiſt, who makes it airy or grave, chearful or plaintive, as it ſuits his own fancy, and often degrades the ſolemnity and gravity ſuitable to divine worſhip, by the lighteſt and moſt trivial airs.

We ſee the ſame want of public Taſte in the Muſic performed between the acts in * Tragedy, where the tone of paſſion is often broke in upon, and deſtroyed by airy and impertinent Muſic.

The effect of Muſic may ſometimes be loſt by an unhappy aſſociation of ideas with the perſon and character of a performer. When we hear at the Oratorio an Italian eunuch ſqueaking

* Elements of Criticiſm.

forth

forth the vengeance of divine wrath, or a gay lively ſtrumpet pouring forth the complaint of a deeply penitent and contrite heart, we muſt be hurt by ſuch an aſſociation.

Theſe obſervations relate principally to the public Taſte of Muſic in Britain, if the public here can be ſaid to have any Taſte in this ſubject.

I ſhall readily allow that Muſic, conſidered merely as the art of affecting the ear agreeably by the power of ſounds, is at preſent in a higher ſtate than perhaps it has ever been in any period; that the principles of harmony were never ſo well aſcertained; and that there never was at any time ſo great a number of performers, in every branch of the art, diſtinguiſhed for the ſpirit, brilliancy, and elegance of their execution. But notwithſtanding all theſe

advantages, it appears to be a fact, of which all men of common sense and observation, whether learned in the science or not, are equally judges; that Music, considered as the art of deeply affecting the heart, and commanding the passions by the power of sounds, is in a very low state, and that the principles on which these great and important effects depend, are either unknown or neglected. Of late years several composers of the highest rank seem to have been very sensible of this capital defect of our modern Music. In Italy particularly, that native country of all the elegant arts, a chastity, a simplicity and pathos of style has been cultivated by some eminent masters, and successfully imitated by others in different parts of Europe. But the evil I complain of seems too complicated

cated and too deeply rooted to admit now of a cure. The rage for variety is ſo exceſſive, and the Taſte, of courſe, ſo indiſcriminating, that compoſers and performers, who depend on the public for their ſubſiſtence, muſt ſatisfy it with any food they can procure, if it has only Novelty to recommend it.

The wild effuſions of unbridled fancy, are often honoured with the titles of invention, ſpirit, and genius; and Taſte ſeems in general to mean nothing but an attachment to what is new, and a contempt for whatever is old in Muſic. Hence it ſeems to be now very generally admitted, that there are no fixt principles of Taſte in Muſic, as in the other fine Arts, and that it has no foundation but in caprice and faſhion. But I conceive that the principles of juſt Taſte in this Art, are as permanently

founded in truth and human Nature, as thoſe of any art or ſcience whatever, and that the principles may be as certainly aſcertained by collecting and arranging the genuine feelings of Nature. The principles which deſerve the chief attention, as being the firſt in point of dignity and utility, are thoſe which relate to the power of Muſic, in commanding the paſſions; next to theſe, the principle of the art exerciſed merely with the view of amuſement, by a tranſient gratification of the ear, ſhould be examined and aſcertained; and in the laſt and loweſt place, the ſimple powers of execution may be conſidered as employed with the ſole view of exciting ſurprize and admiration of the performer's abilities.

I could not purſue this ſubject farther without entering deeply into the intricacies

cacies of the technical part of Muſic, which I have carefully endeavoured to avoid. My deſign was only to ſhew, that Taſte in Muſic has its foundation in Nature and common ſenſe; that its nobleſt powers have been neglected, and that Men of ſenſe and genius ſhould not imagine they want an ear or a muſical Taſte, becauſe they do not reliſh much of the modern Muſic, as in many caſes this is rather a proof of the goodneſs of both.

After all, it cannot be expected, that either Muſic, or any of the fine arts, will ever be cultivated in ſuch a manner as to make them uſeful and ſubſervient to life, till the natural union be reſtored which ſo happily ſubſiſted between them and philoſophy in ancient days; when philoſophy not only gave to the world the moſt accompliſhed ge-

nerals and ſtateſmen, but preſided with the greateſt luſtre and dignity over Rhetoric, Poetry, Muſic, and all the elegant Arts that poliſh and adorn Mankind.

SECTION IV.

IT was formerly obſerved, that the pleaſures ariſing from works of Taſte and Imagination were confined to a ſmall part of Mankind, and that although the foundations of a good Taſte are laid in Human Nature, yet without culture it never becomes a conſiderable ſource of pleaſure. As we formerly made a few obſervations on the real effects produced by a cultivated Taſte in ſome of the fine arts, we ſhall proceed to conſider its influence on the pleaſure ariſing from ſuch works of Genius as are in a particular manner

manner addreſſed to the Imagination and the Heart. This pleaſure, in the earlier part of life, is often extremely high. Youth, indeed, has peculiar advantages in this reſpect. The Imagination is then lively and vigorous, the Heart warm and feeling, equally open to the joyous impreſſions of wit and humour, the force of the ſublime, and every ſofter and more delicate ſentiment of humanity. It is matter of real concern to obſerve the gradual decay of this innocent and rich ſource of enjoyment, together with many others equally pure and natural.—Nature, it is true, has allotted different pleaſures to different periods of life: but there is no reaſon to think, that Nature has totally excluded any period from thoſe pleaſures of which we are now treating.

We have already lamented that many of the uſeful ſciences as well as fine arts were

were left entirely in the hands of Men unaſſiſted with learning and philoſophy; but there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect, that theſe aſſiſtances have commonly been applied to works of Taſte and Imagination in ſuch a manner, as has rather weakened than added to their force and influence.—This ſubject is intereſting, and deſerves a particular diſcuſſion.

The Imagination, like every thing in nature, is ſubjected to general and fixt laws, which can only be diſcovered by experience. But it is no eaſy matter preciſely to aſcertain theſe laws. The ſubject is ſo fleeting, ſo various in different countries, in different conſtitutions of Men, and even in the ſame perſon in different periods and ſituations in life, that it requires the talents of a perſon of the moſt enlarged knowledge of Mankind, to reduce its laws to any kind of ſyſtem; and this perſon likewiſe

wiſe muſt be poſſeſſed of the moſt delicate ſenſibility of Heart and Imagination, otherwiſe he cannot underſtand what he is employed about.—Such a ſyſtem of laws, particularly relating to dramatic and epic Poetry, was formed by ſome great Men of antiquity, and has been ſince very univerſally adopted. Light has thereby been thrown on ſome of the great principles of criticiſm; and rules have been eſtabliſhed, founded on the experience of ſuch beauties as were diſcovered to pleaſe moſt univerſally. But without detracting from the merit of the ancient critics, it muſt be obſerved, that nothing tends more to check the improvement of any art or ſcience, than the reducing all its principles too haſtily into a regular ſyſtem. The bulk of Mankind are incapable of thinking or judging for themſelves on any ſubject. There are

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a few leading ſpirits whom the reſt muſt follow. This makes ſyſtems ſo univerſally acceptable. If they cannot teach people to think and to feel, they teach them what to ſay, which anſwers all the purpoſes of the moſt univerſally ruling paſſion among Mankind, Vanity.

Theſe obſervations are particularly applicable to ſyſtems and rules of criticiſm. When theſe are conſidered as aſſiſtances merely to the operations of Taſte; as giving proper openings for the diſcernment of beauty, by collecting and arranging the feelings of Nature, they promote the improvement of the fine arts. But when they are conſidered as fixed and eſtabliſhed ſtandards, from which there lies no further appeal; when they would impoſe upon us the weight of authority, and fix a preciſe and narrow line, beyond which works of Imagination muſt not ſtray; in this

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caſe they do infinitely more harm than good. Taſte, of all the powers of the Mind, is leaſt ſuited to and moſt impatient of ſuch ſtrict confinement. Some general principles may be pointed out, but to dream of applying always the ſquare and the compaſs to ſuch thin and delicate feelings, as thoſe of the Imagination, is a vain attempt. Add to this, that all criticiſm muſt, in a certain degree, be temporary and local.

Some tempers, and even ſome nations, are moſt pleaſed with Nature in her faireſt and moſt regular forms, while others admire her in the great, the wonderful, and the wild. Thus elegance, regularity, and ſentiment are chiefly attended to in France, and French criticiſm principally regards theſe; but its rules can with no propriety be applied in England, where the natural Genius or Taſte of the

people is very different. The grand, the ſublime, the ſurprizing, and whatever very forcibly ſtrikes the Imagination, ought there to be principally regarded. Where theſe are wanting, the utmoſt elegance and propriety will appear cold and inſipid: where theſe are found, elegance and propriety can be in a good meaſure diſpenſed with.

Whenever what is called a very correct Taſte generally prevails, the powers of Genius and Invention gradually languiſh; and the conſtant attention to prevent giving offence to a few, renders it impoſſible to give much pleaſure to any.

Refinement and delicacy of Taſte is an acquiſition very dangerous and deceitful. It flatters our pride by giving us a conſcious ſuperiority over the reſt of Mankind, and, by ſpecious promiſes of enjoyment unknown to vulgar Minds,

often

often cheats us out of thoſe pleaſures which are equally attainable by the whole ſpecies, and which Nature intended every one ſhould enjoy. People poſſeſſed of extreme delicacy are haunted as it were with an evil Genius, by certain ideas of the coarſe, the low, the vulgar, the irregular, which ſtrike them in all the natural pleaſures of life, and render them incapable of enjoying them.

There is ſcarcely an external or internal ſenſe but may be brought, by conſtant indulgence and attention, to ſuch a degree of acuteneſs as to be diſguſted at every object that is preſented to it.—This extreme ſenſibility and refinement, though at firſt uſually produced by vanity and affectation, yet by a conſtant attention to all the little circumſtances that feed them, ſoon become real and genuine. But Nature has ſet bounds

bounds to all our pleaſures. We may enjoy them ſafely within theſe bounds, but if we refine too much upon them, the certain conſequence is diſappointment and chagrin.

When ſuch a falſe delicacy, or, what has much the ſame effect, when the affectation of it becomes generally prevalent, it checks, in works of Taſte, all vigorous efforts of Genius and Imagination, enervates the force of language, and produces that mediocrity, that coldneſs and inſipidity of compoſition, which does not indeed greatly diſguſt, but never can give high pleaſure. This is one bad effect of criticiſm falling into wrong hands; eſpecially when Men poſſeſſed of mere learning and abſtract philoſophy condeſcend to beſtow their attention on works of Taſte and Imagination. As ſuch Men are ſometimes deficient in thoſe powers of

Fancy, and that ſenſibility of Heart, which are eſſential to the reliſhing ſuch ſubjects, they are too often apt to deſpiſe and condemn thoſe things of which they have no right to judge, as they are neither able to perceive, nor to feel them.

A clear and acute Underſtanding is far from being the only quality neceſſary to form a perfect critic. The Heart is often more concerned here than the Head. In general, it ſeems the more proper buſineſs of true philoſophical criticiſm to obſerve and watch the excurſions of fancy at a diſtance, than to be continually checking all its little irregularities. Too much reſtraint and pruning is of more fatal conſequence here than a little wildneſs and luxuriancy.

The * beauties of every work of

* Muſæum, vol. I.

Taſte

Taſte are of different degrees, and ſo are its blemiſhes. The greateſt blemiſh is the want of ſuch beauties as are characteriſtic, and eſſential to its kind. Thus in dramatic Poetry one part may be conſtructed according to the laws of unity and truth, whilſt another directly contradicts them. The French, by their great attention to the general œconomy and unity of their fable, and the conſtruction of their ſcenes, have univerſally obtained the character of ſuperior correctneſs to the Engliſh. Their reputation in this reſpect is well founded. In their dramatic writings we meet with much leſs that offends: and it muſt alſo be acknowledged, that, beſides mere regularity of conſtruction, they poſſeſs in a high degree the merit of beautiful Poetry and tender ſentiments. But when we examine them in another light,

we find them excelled by the Engliſh. There is a want of force, often a degree of languor, even in their beſt pieces. The ſpeeches are generally too long and declamatory, the ſentiments too fine-ſpun, and the character enervated by a certain French appearance with which they are apt to be marked. Whereas, in the Engliſh theatre, if there be leſs elegance and regularity, there is more fire, more force, and more ſtrength. The paſſions ſpeak more their own native language; and the characters are drawn with a coarſer indeed, but however with a bolder hand.—Shakeſpear, by his lively creative Imagination, his ſtrokes of Nature and Paſſion, and by preſerving the conſiſtency of his characters, amply compenſates for his tranſgreſſions againſt the rules of time and place, with which the Imagination can eaſily diſpenſe. His frequently break-

ing the tide of the Paſſions, by the introduction of low and abſurd comedy, is a more capital tranſgreſſion againſt Nature and the fundamental laws of the drama.

Probability is one of the boundaries, within which it has pleaſed criticiſm to confine the Imagination. This appears plauſible, but upon enquiry will perhaps be found too ſevere a reſtraint. It is obſerved by the ingenious and elegant Author of the Adventurer, that events may appear to our reaſon not only improbable, but abſurd and impoſſible, whilſt yet the Imagination may adopt them with facility and delight. The time was, when an univerſal belief prevailed of inviſible agents intereſting themſelves in the affairs of this world. Many events were ſuppoſed to happen out of the ordinary courſe of things by the ſupernatural agency of theſe ſpirits,

who were believed to be of different ranks, and of different diſpoſitions towards Mankind. Such a belief was well adapted to make a deep impreſſion on ſome of the moſt powerful principles of our Nature, to gratify the natural paſſion for the marvellous, to dilate the Imagination, and to give boundleſs ſcope to its excurſions.

In thoſe days the old Romance was in its higheſt glory. And though a belief of the interpoſition of theſe inviſible powers in the ordinary affairs of Mankind has now ceaſed, yet it ſtill keeps its hold of the Imagination, which has a natural propenſity to embrace this opinion. Hence we find that Oriental tales continue to be univerſally read and admired, by thoſe who have not the leaſt belief in the Genii, who are the moſt important agents in the ſtory. All that we require in theſe works of Imagination

nation is an unity and conſiſtency of character *. The Imagination willingly allows itſelf to be deceived into a belief of the exiſtence of beings, which reaſon ſees to be ridiculous; but then every event muſt take place in ſuch a regular manner as may be naturally expected from the interpoſition of ſuch ſuperior intelligence and power. It is not a ſingle violation of truth and probability that offends, but ſuch a violation as perpetually recurs. We have a ſtrong evidence of the facility with which the Imagination is deceived, in the effects produced by a well-acted Tragedy. The Imagination there ſoon becomes too much heated, and the Paſſions too much intereſted, to permit reaſon to reflect that we are agitated with the feigned diſtreſs of people entirely at their eaſe. We ſuffer ourſelves to be tranſported

* Adventurer.

from place to place, and believe we are hearing the private ſoliloquy of a perſon in his chamber, while he is talking on a ſtage ſo as to be heard by thouſands.

The deception in our modern Novels is more perfect than in the old Romance; but as they profeſs to paint Nature and Characters as they really are, it is evident that the powers of fancy cannot have the ſame play, nor can the ſucceſſion of incidents be ſo quick nor ſo ſurprizing. It requires therefore a Genius of the firſt claſs to give them that ſpirit and variety ſo neceſſary to captivate the Imagination, and to preſerve them from ſinking into dry narrative and tireſome declamation.

Notwithſtanding the ridiculous extravagance of the old Romance in many particulars, it ſeems calculated to produce more favourable effects on the morals

morals of Mankind, than our modern Novels.—If the former did not repreſent Men as they really are, it repreſented them as they ought to be; its heroes were patterns of courage, generoſity, truth, humanity, and the moſt exalted virtues. Its heroines were diſtinguiſhed for modeſty, delicacy, and the utmoſt dignity of manners.—The latter repreſent Mankind too much what they are, paint ſuch ſcenes of pleaſure and vice as ought never to ſee the light, and thus in a manner hackney youth in the ways of wickedneſs, before they are well entered into the world; expoſe the fair ſex in the moſt wanton and ſhameleſs manner to the eyes of the world, by ſtripping them of that modeſt reſerve, which is the foundation of grace and dignity, the veil with which Nature intended to protect them from too familiar an eye, in order to be

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at once the greateſt incitement to love and the greateſt ſecurity to virtue.—In ſhort, the one may miſlead the Imagination; the other tends to inflame the Paſſions and to corrupt the Heart.

The pleaſure which we receive from Hiſtory ariſes in a great meaſure from the ſame ſource with that which we receive from Romance. It is not the bare recital of facts that gives us pleaſure. They muſt be facts that give ſome agitation to the Mind by their being important, intereſting, or ſurprizing. But events of this kind do not very frequently occur in Hiſtory, nor does it deſcend to paint thoſe minute features of particular perſons which are more likely to engage our affections and intereſt our paſſions than the fate of nations. It is not therefore ſurprizing that we find it ſo difficult to keep attention awake in reading Hiſtory, and

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that fewer have ſucceeded in this kind of compoſition than in any other. To render Hiſtory pleaſing and intereſting, it is not enough that it be ſtrictly impartial, that it be written with the utmoſt elegance of language, and abound in the moſt judicious and uncommon obſervations. We are never agreeably intereſted in a Hiſtory, till we contract an attachment to ſome public and important cauſe, or ſome diſtinguiſhed characters which it repreſents to us. The fate of theſe engages the attention and keeps the Mind in an anxious yet pleaſing ſuſpence. Nor do we require the author to violate the truth of Hiſtory, by repreſenting our favourite cauſe or hero as perfect; we will allow him to repreſent all their weakneſſes and imperfections, but ſtill it muſt be with ſuch a tender and delicate hand as not to deſtroy our attachment. There is a

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ſort of unity or conſiſtency of charac-ter that we expect even in Hiſtory. An author of any ingenuity can, if he pleaſes, eaſily diſappoint this expecta-tion, without deviating from truth. There are certain features in the great-eſt and worthieſt Men, which may be painted in ſuch a light as to make their characters appear little and ridiculous. Thus if an Hiſtorian be conſtantly at-tentive to check admiration, it is cer-tainly in his power; but if the Mind be thus continually diſappointed, and can never find an object that may be contemplated with pleaſure, though we may admire his Genius, and be inſtruct-ed by his Hiſtory, he will never leave a pleaſing and grateful impreſſion on the Mind. Where this is the prevailing ſpirit and genius of a Hiſtory, it not only deprives us of a great part of the pleaſure we expected from it, but leaves

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diſagreeable effects on the Mind, as it ſtifles that noble enthuſiaſm, which is the foundation of all great actions, and produces a fatal ſcepticiſm, coldneſs, and indifference about all characters and principles whatſoever. We acknowledge indeed that this manner of writing may be of great ſervice in correcting the narrow prejudices of party and faction; as they will be more influenced by the repreſentations of one who ſeems to take no ſide, than by any thing which can be ſaid by their antagoniſts.

But the principal and moſt important end of Hiſtory, is to promote the intereſts of Liberty and Virtue, and not merely to gratify curioſity. Impartial Hiſtory will always be favourable to theſe intereſts. The elegance of its ſtile and compoſition, is chiefly to be valued, as it ſerves to engage the reader's attention. But if an Hiſtorian has no

no regard to what we here ſuppoſe ſhould be the ultimate ends of Hiſtory, if he conſiders it only as calculated to give an exerciſe and amuſement to the Mind, he may undoubtedly make his work anſwer a very different purpoſe. The circumſtances that attend all great events are ſo complicated, and the weakneſſes and inconſiſtencies of every human character, however exalted and amiable, are ſo various, that an ingenious writer has an opportunity of placing them in a point of view that may ſuit whatever cauſe he chooſes to eſpouſe. Under the ſpecious pretence of a regard to truth, and a ſuperiority to vulgar prejudices, he may render the beſt cauſe doubtful, and the moſt reſpectable character ambiguous. This may be eaſily done without any abſolute deviation from Truth; by only ſuppreſſing ſome circumſtances, and giving a high colouring to others; by

by taking advantage of the frivolous and diſſolute ſpirit of the age, which delights in ſeeing the moſt ſacred and important ſubjects turned into ridicule; and by inſinuations that convey, in the ſtrongeſt manner, ſentiments which the Author, from affected fear of the laws, or a pretended delicate regard to eſtabliſhed opinions, ſeems unwilling fully and clearly to expreſs. Of all the methods that have been uſed to ſhake thoſe principles on which the virtue, the liberties, and the happineſs of Mankind depend, this is the moſt dangerous as well as the moſt illiberal and diſingenuous. It is impoſſible to confute a hint, or to anſwer an objection that is not fully and explicitly ſtated. There is a certain ſpecies of impartiality with which no man, who has good principles, or a ſenſible heart, will ſit down to write Hiſtory; that impartiality, which

which ſuppoſes an abſolute indifference to whatever may be its conſequences on the minds of the readers. Such an indifference, in regard to the reſult of our enquiries, is natural and proper in the abſtract Sciences, and in thoſe philoſophical diſquiſitions, where truth is the ſingle and ultimate object, not connected with any thing that may engage the affections or eſſentially affect the intereſts of Mankind. But a candid Hiſtorian, who is the friend of Mankind, will diſclaim this coldneſs and inſenſibility: He will openly avow his attachment to the cauſe of liberty and virtue, and will conſider the ſubſervieney of his Hiſtory to their intereſts as its higheſt merit and honour. He will be perſuaded that Truth, that impartial Hiſtory, can never hurt theſe ſacred intereſts; but he will never pretend ſo far to diveſt himſelf of the feelings of a Man, as to

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be indifferent whether they do or not.

A lively Imagination, and particularly a poetical one, bears confinement no where ſo ill as in the uſe of Metaphor and Imagery. This is the peculiar province of the Imagination. The ſoundeſt head can neither aſſiſt nor judge in it. The Poet's eye, as it * *glances from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven*, is ſtruck with numberleſs ſimilitudes and analogies, that not only paſs unnoticed by the reſt of Mankind, but cannot even be comprehended when ſuggeſted to them. There is a correſpondence between certain external forms of Nature, and certain affections of the Mind, that may be felt, but cannot always be explained. Sometimes the aſſociation may be accidental, but it often ſeems to be innate. Hence the great

* Shakeſpeare.

difficulty of aſcertaining the true ſublime. It cannot in truth be confined within any bounds; it is entirely relative, depending on the warmth and livelineſs of the Imagination, and therefore different in different countries. For the ſame reaſon, wherever there is great richneſs and profuſion of Imagery, which in ſome ſpecies of Poetry is a principal beauty, there are always very general complaints of obſcurity, which is increaſed by thoſe ſudden tranſitions that bewilder a common reader, but are eaſily traced by a poetical one. An accurate ſcrutiny into the propriety of Images and Metaphors is fruitleſs. If it be not felt at firſt, it can ſeldom be communicated: while we endeavour to analyſe it, the impreſſion vaniſhes. The ſame obſervation may be applied to Wit, which conſiſts in a quick and unexpected aſſemblage of ideas, that ſtrike

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the Mind in an agreeable manner either by their reſemblance or their incongruity. Neither is the juſtneſs of humour a ſubject that will bear reaſoning. This conſiſts in a lively painting of thoſe weakneſſes of character, which are not of importance enough to raiſe pity or indignation, but only excite mirth and laughter. One muſt have an idea of the original to judge of, or be affected by the repreſentation, and if he does not ſee its juſtneſs at the firſt glance, he never ſees it. For this reaſon moſt works of humour, ridicule, and ſatire, which paint the particular features and manners of the times, being local and tranſient, quickly loſe their poignancy, and become obſcure and inſipid.

Whatever is the object of Imagination and Taſte can only be ſeen to advantage at a certain diſtance, and in a

particular light. If brought too near the eye, the beauty which charmed before appears faded, and often diſtorted. It is therefore the buſineſs of judgment to aſcertain this point of view, to exhibit the object to the Mind in that poſition which gives it moſt pleaſure, and to prevent the Mind from viewing it in any other. This is generally very much in our own power. It is an art which we all practiſe in common life. We learn by habit to turn to the eye the agreeable ſide of any object which gives us pleaſure, and to keep the dark one out of ſight. If this be kept within any reaſonable bounds, the ſoundeſt judgment will not only connive at, but approve it.—Whatever we admire or love, as great, or beautiful, or amiable, has certain circumſtances belonging to it, which, if attended to, would poiſon our enjoyment.—

ment.—We are agreeably ſtruck with the grandeur and magnificence of Nature in her wildeſt forms, with the proſpect of vaſt and ſtupendous mountains; but is there any neceſſity for our attending, at the ſame time, to the bleakneſs, the coldneſs, and the barrenneſs, which are univerſally connected with them? When a lover contemplates with rapture the charms of beauty and elegance, that captivate his heart, need he at the ſame time reflect how uncertain and tranſient the object of his paſſion is, and that the ſucceſſion of a few years muſt lay it mouldering in the duſt?

But we not only think it unneceſſary always to ſee the whole truth, but frequently allow and juſtify ourſelves in viewing things magnified beyond the truth. We indulge a manifeſt partiality to our friends, to our children, and to our native country. We not only keep

their failings, as much as prudence will juſtify, out of ſight, but we exalt in our Imagination all their good qualities beyond their juſt value. Nor does the general ſenſe of Mankind condemn this indulgence; for this very good reaſon, becauſe it is natural, and becauſe we could not forego it, without loſing at the ſame time all ſenſe of friendſhip, natural affection, and patriotiſm. —There appears no ſufficient reaſon why this conduct, which we obſerve in common life, ſhould not be followed in our enquiries into works of Imagination. A perſon of a cultivated Taſte, while he reſigns himſelf to the firſt impreſſions of pleaſure excited by real excellence, can at the ſame time, with the ſlighteſt glance of the eye, perceive whether the work will bear a nearer inſpection. If it can bear this, he has an additional pleaſure, ariſing from thoſe latent beauties

ties which ſtrike the Imagination leſs forcibly. If he finds they cannot bear this examination, he ſhould remove his attention immediately, and he ſhould gratefully enjoy the pleaſure he has already received.

A correct Taſte is very much offended with Dr. Young's Night Thoughts; it obſerves that the repreſentation there given of Human Life is falſe and gloomy; that the Poetry ſometimes ſinks into childiſh conceits or proſaic flatneſs, but oftener riſes into the turgid or falſe ſublime; that it is perplexed and obſcure; that the reaſoning is often weak; and that the general plan of the work is ill laid, and not happily conducted.—Yet this work may be read with very different ſentiments. It may be found to contain many touches of the moſt ſublime Poetry that any language has produced, and to be full of thoſe pathetic

ſtrokes of Nature and Paſſion, which touch the heart in the moſt tender and affecting manner.—

Beſides, the Mind is ſometimes in a diſpoſition to be pleaſed only with dark views of Human Life.

There are afflictions too deep to bear either reaſoning or amuſement. They may be ſoothed, but cannot be diverted. The gloom of the Night Thoughts perfectly correſponds with this ſtate of Mind. It indulges and flatters the preſent paſſion, and at the ſame time preſents thoſe motives of conſolation which alone can render certain griefs ſupportable.—We may here obſerve that ſecret and wonderful endearment, which Nature has annexed to all our ſympathetic feelings. We enter into the deepeſt ſcenes of diſtreſs and ſorrow with a melting ſoftneſs of Heart, far more delightful than all the joys which diſſi-

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pated and unthinking mirth can inſpire. * Dr. Akenſide deſcribes this very pathetically.

——————Aſk the faithful youth,
Why the cold urn of her, whom long he loved,
So often fills his arms; ſo often draws
His lonely footſteps at the ſilent hour,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
Oh! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er ſeduce his boſom to forego
That ſacred hour, when ſtealing from the noiſe
Of care and envy, ſweet remembrance ſooths
With virtue's kindeſt looks his aking breaſt,
And turns his tears to rapture.

He afterwards proceeds to paint, with all the enthuſiaſm of liberty and poetic Genius, and in all the ſweetneſs and harmony of numbers, thoſe heart-ennobling ſorrows, which the Mind feels by the repreſentation of the preſent miſer-

* Pleaſures of Imagination.

able

able condition of thoſe countries, which were once the happy ſeats of Genius, Liberty, and the greateſt virtues that adorn humanity.

What ought chiefly to be regarded in the culture of Taſte is to diſcover thoſe many beauties, in the works of Nature and Art, which would otherwiſe eſcape our notice. Thomſon, in that beautiful deſcriptive poem, the Seaſons, pleaſes from the juſtneſs of his painting; but his greateſt merit conſiſts in impreſſing the Mind with numberleſs beauties of Nature, in her various and ſucceſſive forms, which formerly paſſed unheeded. —This is the moſt pleaſing and uſeful effect of criticiſm; to diſplay new ſources of pleaſure unknown to the bulk of Mankind; and it is only ſo far as it diſcovers theſe, that Taſte can with reaſon be accounted a bleſſing.

It has been often obſerved that a good

Taſte

Taſte and a good Heart commonly go together. But that ſort of Taſte, which is conſtantly prying into blemiſhes and deformity, can have no good effect either on the Temper or the Heart. The Mind naturally takes a taint from thoſe objects and purſuits in which it is uſually employed. Diſguſt, often recurring, ſpoils the Temper, and a habit of nicely diſcriminating, when carried into real life, contracts the Heart, and, by holding up to view the faults and weakneſſes inſeparable from every character, not only checks all the benevolent and generous affections, but ſtifles all the pleaſing emotions of love and admiration.

The habit of dwelling too much on what is ridiculous in ſubjects of Taſte, when transferred into life, has likewiſe a bad effect upon the character, if not ſoftened by a large portion of humanity and

and good-humour, as it confers only a ſullen and gloomy pleaſure, by feeding the worſt and moſt painful feelings of the human heart, envy and malignity. But an intimate acquaintance with the works of Nature and Genius, in their moſt beautiful and amiable forms, humanizes and ſweetens the Temper, opens and extends the Imagination, and diſpoſes to the moſt pleaſing views of Mankind and Providence. By conſidering Nature in this favourable point of view, the Heart is dilated, and filled with the moſt benevolent ſentiments, and then indeed the ſecret ſympathy and connection between the feelings of Natural and Moral Beauty, the connection between a good Taſte and a good Heart, appears with the greateſt luſtre.

SECTION V.

WE proceed now to conſider that principle of Human Nature, which ſeems in a peculiar manner the characteriſtic of the ſpecies, the Senſe of Religion. It is not my intention here to conſider the evidence of Religion as founded in truth; I propoſe only to examine it as a principle founded in Human Nature, and the influence it actually has, or may have, on the happineſs of Mankind.—The beneficial conſequences which ſhould naturally reſult from this principle, ſeem very obvious. There is ſomething peculiarly ſoothing and comfortable

fortable in a firm belief that the whole frame of Nature is ſupported and conducted by an eternal and omnipotent Being, of infinite goodneſs, who intends, by the whole courſe of his providence, to promote the greateſt good of all his creatures; a belief that we are acquainted with the means of conciliating the Divine favour, and that in conſequence of this we have it in our own power to obtain it; a belief that this life is but the infancy of our exiſtence, that we ſhall ſurvive the ſeeming deſtruction of our preſent frame, and have it in our power to ſecure our entrance on a new ſtate of eternal felicity. If we believe that the conduct which the Deity requires of us is ſuch as moſt effectually ſecures our preſent happineſs, together with the peace and happineſs of ſociety, we ſhould of courſe conclude that theſe ſentiments would be fondly cheriſhed

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and adopted by all wiſe and good Men, whether they were ſuppoſed to ariſe from any natural anticipation of the Human Mind, the force of Reaſon, or an immediate revelation from the Supreme Being.

But though the belief of a Deity and of a future ſtate of exiſtence have univerſally prevailed in all ages and nations, yet it has been diverſified and connected with a variety of ſuperſtitions, which have often rendered it uſeleſs, and ſometimes hurtful to the general intereſts of Mankind. The Supreme Being has ſometimes been repreſented in ſuch a light, as made him rather an object of terror than of love; as executing both preſent and eternal vengeance on the greateſt part of the world, for crimes they never committed, and for not believing doctrines which they never heard. —Men have been taught that they did

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God acceptable ſervice, by abſtracting themſelves from all the duties they owed to ſociety, by denying themſelves all the pleaſures of life, and even by voluntarily enduring and inflicting on themſelves the ſevereſt tortures which Nature could ſupport. They have been taught that it was their duty to perſecute their fellow-creatures in the moſt cruel manner, in order to bring them to an uniformity with themſelves in religious opinions; a ſcheme equally barbarous and impracticable. In fine, Religion has often been uſed as an engine to deprive Mankind of their moſt valuable privileges, and to ſubject them to the moſt deſpotic tyranny.

Theſe pernicious conſequences have given occaſion to ſome ingenious Men to queſtion, whether Atheiſm or Superſtition were moſt deſtructive to the happineſs of ſociety; while others have

been ſo much impreſſed by them, that they ſeemed to entertain no doubt of its being ſafer to diveſt Mankind of all religious opinions and reſtraints whatever, than to run the riſk of the abuſes which they thought almoſt inſeparable from them.—This ſeems to be the moſt favourable conſtruction that can be put on the conduct of the patrons of Atheiſm. But however ſpecious this pretence might have been ſome centuries ago, there does not at this time appear to be the leaſt foundation for it. Experience has now ſhewn that Religion may ſubſiſt in a public eſtabliſhment, diveſted of that abſurd and pernicious Superſtition which was only adventitious, and moſt apparently contrary to its genuine and original ſpirit and genius.—To ſeparate Religion entirely from Superſtition, in every individual, may indeed be impoſſible, becauſe it is impoſſible to make all

Mankind think wiſely and properly on any one ſubject, where the Underſtanding alone is concerned, much more where the Imagination and the Affections are ſo deeply intereſted. But if the poſitive advantages of Religion to Mankind be evident, this ſhould ſeem a ſufficient reaſon for every worthy Man to ſupport its cauſe, and at the ſame time to keep it diſengaged from thoſe accidental circumſtances that have ſo highly diſhonoured it.

Mankind certainly have a ſenſe of right and wrong, independent of religious belief; but experience ſhews, that the allurements of preſent pleaſure, and the impetuoſity of paſſion, are ſufficient to prevent Men from acting agreeably to this moral ſenſe, unleſs it be ſupported by Religion, the influence of which upon the Imagination and Paſſions, if properly directed, is extremely powerful.

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We ſhall readily acknowledge that many of the greateſt enemies of Religion have been diſtinguiſhed for their honour, probity, and good-nature. But it is to be conſidered, that many virtues as well as vices are conſtitutional. A cool and equal Temper, a dull Imagination, and unfeeling Heart, enſure the poſſeſſion of many virtues, or rather are a ſecurity againſt many vices. They may produce temperance, chaſtity, honeſty, prudence, and a harmleſs, inoffenſive behaviour. Whereas keen Paſſions, a warm Imagination, and great ſenſibility of Heart, lay a natural foundation for prodigality, debauchery, and ambition; attended, however, with the ſeeds of all the ſocial and moſt heroic virtues. Such a temperature of Mind carries along with it a check to its conſtitutional vices, by rendering thoſe poſſeſſed of it peculiarly ſuſceptible of religious impreſſions.

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They often appear indeed to be the greateſt enemies to Religion, but that is entirely owing to their impatience of its reſtraints. Its moſt dangerous enemies have ever been among the temperate and chaſte philoſophers, void of paſſion and ſenſibility, who had no vicious appetites to be reſtrained by its influence, and who were equally unſuſceptible of its terrors or its pleaſures. Abſolute Infidelity or ſettled Scepticiſm in Religion we acknowledge is no proof of want of Underſtanding or a vicious diſpoſition, but is certainly a very ſtrong preſumption of the want of Imagination and ſenſibility of Heart, and of a perverted Underſtanding. Some philoſophers have been Infidels, few Men of taſte and ſentiment. Yet the examples of Lord Bacon, Mr. Locke, and Sir Iſaac Newton, among many other firſt names in philoſophy, are a

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ſufficient evidence that religious belief is perfectly compatible with the cleareſt and moſt enlarged Underſtanding.

Several of thoſe who have ſurmounted what they call religious prejudices themſelves, affect to treat ſuch as are not aſhamed to avow their regard to Religion, as Men of weak Underſtandings and feeble Minds. But this ſhews either want of candor or great ignorance of Human Nature. The fundamental articles of Religion have been very generally believed by Men the moſt diſtinguiſhed for acuteneſs and accuracy of judgment. Nay, it is unjuſt to infer the weakneſs of a perſon's head on other ſubjects from his attachment even to the fooleries of Superſtition. Experience ſhews that when the Imagination is heated, and the Affections deeply intereſted, they level all diſtinctions of Underſtanding; yet this affords no pre-

ſumption of a ſhallow judgment in ſubjects where the Imagination and Paſſions have no influence.

Feebleneſs of Mind is a reproach frequently thrown, not only upon ſuch as have a ſenſe of Religion, but upon all who poſſeſs warm, open, chearful Tempers, and Hearts peculiarly diſpoſed to love and friendſhip. But the reproach is ill founded. Strength of Mind does not conſiſt in a peeviſh Temper, in a hard inflexible Heart, and in bidding defiance to God Almighty. It conſiſts in an active reſolute Spirit, in a Spirit that enables a Man to act his part in the world with propriety, and to bear the misfortunes of life with uniform fortitude and dignity. This is a ſtrength of Mind which neither Atheiſm nor univerſal Scepticiſm will ever be able to inſpire. On the contrary, their tendency will be found to chill all the powers of Imagi-

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nation; to depreſs Spirit as well as Genius; to ſour the Temper and contract the Heart. The higheſt religious ſpirit, and veneration for Providence, breathes in the writings of the ancient Stoics; a ſect diſtinguiſhed for producing the moſt active, intrepid, virtuous Men that ever did honour to Human Nature.

Can it be pretended that Atheiſm or univerſal Scepticiſm have any tendency to form ſuch characters? Do they tend to inſpire that magnanimity and elevation of Mind, that ſuperiority to ſelfiſh and ſenſual gratifications, that contempt of danger and of death, when the cauſe of virtue, of liberty, or their country require it, which diſtinguiſh the characters of Patriots and Heroes? or is their influence more favourable on the humbler and gentler virtues of private and domeſtic life? Do they ſoften the heart,

and render it more delicately ſenſible of the thouſand nameleſs duties and endearments of a Huſband, a Father, or a Friend? Do they produce that habitual ſerenity and chearfulneſs of temper, that gaiety of heart, which makes a Man beloved as a Companion? or do they dilate the heart with the liberal and generous ſentiments, and that love of human kind, which would render him revered and bleſſed as the patron of depreſſed merit, the friend of the widow and orphan, the refuge and ſupport of the poor and the unhappy?

The general opinion of Mankind, that there is a ſtrong connection between a religious diſpoſition and a feeling Heart, appears from the univerſal diſlike, which all Men have to Infidelity in the Fair Sex. We not only look on it as removing the principal ſecurity we have for their virtue, but as the ſtrongeſt proof

proof of their want of that ſoftneſs and delicate ſenſibility of Heart, which peculiarly endears them to us, and more effectually ſecures their empire over us, than any quality they can poſſeſs.

There are indeed ſome Men who can perſuade themſelves, that there is no Supreme Intelligence who directs the courſe of Nature; who can ſee thoſe they have been connected with by the ſtrongeſt bonds of Nature and Friendſhip gradually diſappearing; who are perſuaded that this ſeparation is final and eternal, and who expect that they themſelves ſhall ſoon ſink down after them into nothing; and yet ſuch Men appear eaſy and contented. But to a ſenſible Heart, and particularly to a Heart ſoftened by paſt endearments of Love or Friendſhip, ſuch opinions are attended with gloom inexpreſſible; they ſtrike a damp into all the pleaſures and en-

joyments of life, and cut off thoſe proſpects which alone can comfort the ſoul under certain diſtreſſes, where all other aid is feeble and ineffectual.

Scepticiſm, or ſuſpence of judgment as to the truth of the great articles of Religion, is attended with the ſame fatal effects. Wherever the Affections are deeply intereſted, a ſtate of ſuſpence is more intolerable, and more diſtracting to the Mind, than the ſad aſſurance of the evil which is moſt dreaded.

There are many who have paſt the age of Youth and Beauty, who have reſigned the pleaſures of that ſmiling ſeaſon; who begin to decline into the vale of Years, impaired in their Health, depreſſed in their Fortunes, ſtript of their Friends, their Children, and, perhaps, ſtill more tender and endearing connections. What reſource can this world afford them? It preſents a dark and dreary

dreary waſte, thro' which there does not iſſue a ſingle ray of comfort. Every deluſive proſpect of Ambition is now at an end; long experience of Mankind, an experience very different from what the open and generous ſoul of youth had fondly dreamt of, has rendered the Heart almoſt inacceſſible to new Friendſhips. The principal ſources of Activity are taken away, when thoſe for whom we labour are cut off from us, thoſe who animated, and thoſe who ſweetened all the toils of life. Where then can the ſoul find refuge, but in the boſom of Religion? There ſhe is admitted to thoſe proſpects of Providence and Futurity, which alone can warm and fill the Heart. I ſpeak here of ſuch as retain the feelings of Humanity, whom Misfortunes have ſoftened and perhaps rendered more delicately ſenſible; not of ſuch as poſſeſs that ſtupid Inſenſibility which ſome

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are pleaſed to dignify with the name of Philoſophy.

It ſhould therefore be expected that thoſe Philoſophers, who ſtand in no need themſelves of the aſſiſtance of Religion to ſupport their virtue, and who never feel the want of its conſolations, would yet have the humanity to conſider the very different ſituation of the reſt of Mankind; and not endeavour to deprive them of what Habit, at leaſt, if they will not allow it to be Nature, has made neceſſary to their morals and to their happineſs.—It might be expected that Humanity would prevent them from breaking into the laſt retreat of the unfortunate, who can no longer be objects of their envy or reſentment, and tearing from them their only remaining comfort. The attempt to ridicule Religion may be agreeable to ſome, by relieving them from a reſtraint upon their pleaſures,

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and may render others very miſerable, by making them doubt thoſe truths, in which they were moſt deeply intereſted; but it can convey real good and happineſs to no one individual.

To ſupport openly and avowedly the cauſe of Infidelity, may be owing in ſome to the vanity of appearing wiſer than the reſt of Mankind; to Vanity, that amphibious paſſion that ſeeks for food, not only in the affectation of every beauty, and every virtue that adorn Humanity, but of every vice and perverſion of the Underſtanding, that diſgrace it. The zeal of making proſelytes to it may often be attributed to a like vanity of poſſeſſing a direction and aſcendency over the Minds of Men, which is a very flattering ſpecies of ſuperiority. But there ſeems to be ſome other cauſe that ſecretly influences the conduct of ſome that reject all Religion, who from the reſt

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of their character cannot be ſuſpected of vanity, or any ambition of ſuch ſuperiority. This we ſhall attempt to explain.

The very differing in opinion, upon any intereſting ſubject, from all around us, gives a diſagreeable ſenſation. This muſt be greatly increaſed in the preſent caſe, as the feeling, which attends Infidelity or Scepticiſm in Religion, is certainly a comfortleſs one, where there is the leaſt degree of ſenſibility.—Sympathy is much more ſought after by an unhappy Mind, than by one chearful and at eaſe. We require a ſupport in the one caſe, which in the other is not neceſſary. A perſon therefore void of Religion feels himſelf as it were alone in the midſt of ſociety; and though for prudential reaſons he chooſes on ſome occaſions to diſguiſe his ſentiments, and join in ſome form of religious worſhip,

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yet this to a candid and ingenuous Mind muſt always be very painful; nor does it abate the diſagreeable feeling which a ſocial ſpirit has in finding itſelf alone and without any friend to ſooth and participate its uneaſineſs. This ſeems to have a conſiderable ſhare in that anxiety which Free-thinkers generally diſcover to make proſelytes to their opinions, an anxiety much greater than what is ſhewn by thoſe, whoſe Minds are at eaſe in the enjoyment of happier proſpects.

The excuſe, which theſe gentlemen plead for their conduct, is a regard for the cauſe of truth. But this is a very inſufficient one. None of them act upon this principle, in its largeſt extent and application in common life. Nor could any Man live in the world and pretend ſo to do. In the purſuit of happineſs, * *our being's end and aim*, the diſcovery

* Pope.

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of truth is far from being the moſt important object. It is true, the Mind receives a high pleaſure from the inveſtigation and diſcovery of Truth, in the abſtract ſciences, in the works of Nature and Art; but in all ſubjects, where the Imagination and Affections are deeply concerned, we regard it only ſo far as it is ſubſervient to them.—One of the firſt principles of ſociety, of decency, and of good manners, is, that no Man is entitled to ſay every thing he thinks true, when it would be injurious or offenſive to his neighbour. If it was not for this principle, all Mankind would be in a ſtate of hoſtility.

Suppoſe a perſon to loſe an only child, the ſole comfort and happineſs of his life. When the firſt overflowings of Nature are paſt, he recollects the infinite goodneſs and impenetrable wiſdom of the Diſpoſer of all events, he is perſuaded

ſuaded that the revolution of a few years will again unite him to his child never more to be ſeparated. With theſe ſentiments he acquieſces with a melancholy yet pleaſing reſignation to the Divine will. Now ſuppoſing all this to be a deception, a pleaſing dream, would not the general ſenſe of Mankind condemn the Philoſopher as barbarous and inhuman, who ſhould attempt to wake him out of it?—Yet ſo far does vanity prevail over good-nature, that we frequently ſee Men, on other occaſions of the moſt benevolent Tempers, labouring to cut off that hope, which can alone chear the Heart under all the preſſures and afflictions of Human Life, and enable us to reſign it with chearfulneſs and dignity.

Religion may be conſidered in three different views. Firſt, As containing doctrines relating to the being and per-

fections of God, his moral adminiſtration of the world, a future ſtate of exiſtence, and particular communications to Mankind by an immediate ſupernatural revelation.—Secondly, As a rule of life and manners.—Thirdly, As the ſource of certain peculiar affections of the Mind, which either give pleaſure or pain, according to the particular genius and ſpirit of the Religion that inſpires them.

In the firſt of theſe views, which gives a foundation to all religious belief, and on which the other two depend, Reaſon is principally concerned. On this ſubject the greateſt efforts of human genius and application have been exerted, and with the moſt deſirable ſucceſs in thoſe great and important articles that ſeem moſt immediately to affect the intereſt and happineſs of Mankind. But when our enquiries here are

puſhed to a certain length, we find that Providence has ſet bounds to our Reaſon, and even to our capacities of apprehenſion. This is particularly the caſe, with reſpect to infinity and the moral œconomy of the Deity. The objects are here in a great meaſure beyond the reach of our conception; and induction from experience, on which all our other reaſonings are founded, cannot be applied to a ſubject altogether diſſimilar to any thing we are acquainted with.—Many of the fundamental articles of Religion are ſuch, that the Mind may have the fulleſt conviction of their truth, but they muſt be viewed at a diſtance, and are rather the objects of ſilent and religious veneration, than of metaphyſical diſquiſition. If the Mind attempts to bring them to a nearer view, it is confounded with their ſtrangeneſs and immenſity.

When we purſue our enquiries into any part of Nature, beyond certain bounds, we find ourſelves involved in perplexity and darkneſs. But there is this remarkable difference between theſe and religious enquiries: In the inveſtigation of Nature, we can always make a progreſs in knowledge, and approximate to the truth by the proper exertion of genius and obſervation; but our enquiries into religious ſubjects, are confined within very narrow bounds; nor can any force of reaſon or application lead the Mind one ſtep beyond that impenetrable gulf, which ſeparates the viſible, and inviſible world.

Though the articles of religious belief, which fall within the comprehenſion of Mankind, and ſeem eſſential to their happineſs, are few and ſimple; yet ingenious Men have contrived to erect them into moſt tremendous ſyſtems of meta-

metaphyſical ſubtlety, which will long remain monuments both of the extent, and the weakneſs of human Underſtanding. The pernicious conſequences of ſuch ſyſtems, have been various. By attempting to eſtabliſh too much, they have hurt the foundation of the moſt intereſting principles of Religion.—Moſt Men are educated, in a belief of the peculiar, and diſtinguiſhed opinions of ſome one religious ſect or other. They are taught that all theſe are equally founded on Divine authority, or the cleareſt deductions of Reaſon. By which means, their ſyſtem of Religion hangs ſo much together, that one part cannot be ſhaken, without endangering the whole. But wherever any freedom of enquiry is allowed, the abſurdity of ſome of theſe opinions, and the uncertain foundation of others, cannot be concealed. This naturally begets a ge-

neral diſtruſt of the whole, with that fatal lukewarmneſs in Religion, which is its neceſſary conſequence.

The very habit of frequent reaſoning, and diſputing upon religious ſubjects, diminiſhes that reverence, with which the Mind would otherwiſe conſider them. This ſeems particularly to be the caſe, when Men preſume to enter into a minute ſcrutiny of the views, and œconomy of Providence, in the adminiſtration of the world; why the Supreme Being made it as it is; the freedom of his actions; and many other ſuch queſtions, infinitely beyond our reach. The natural tendency of this is to leſſen that awful veneration with which we ought always to contemplate the Divinity, but which can never be preſerved, when Men canvaſs his ways with ſuch unwarrantable freedom. Accordingly we find, amongſt thoſe ſecta-

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ries where ſuch diſquiſitions have principally prevailed, that he has been mentioned and even addreſſed with the moſt indecent and ſhocking familiarity. The truly devotional ſpirit, whoſe chief foundation and characteriſtic is genuine and profound humility, is not to be looked for among ſuch perſons.

Another bad effect of this ſpeculative Theology has been to withdraw people's attention from its practical duties. — We uſually find that thoſe, who are moſt diſtinguiſhed by their exceſſive zeal for opinions in Religion, ſhew great moderation and coolneſs as to its precepts; and their great ſeverity in this reſpect, is commonly exerted againſt a few vices where the Heart is but little concerned, and to which their own diſpoſitions preſerved them from any temptations.

But the worſt effects of ſpeculative

and controverſial theology are thoſe which it produces on the Temper and Affections. — When the Mind is kept conſtantly embarraſſed in a perplext and thorny path, where it can find no ſteady light to ſhew the way, nor foundation to reſt on, the Temper loſes its native chearfulneſs, and contracts a gloom and ſeverity, partly from the chagrin of diſappointment, and partly from the ſocial and kind Affections being extinguiſhed for want of exerciſe. When this evil is exaſperated by oppoſition and diſpute, the conſequences prove very fatal to the peace of ſociety; eſpecially when Men are perſuaded, that their holding certain opinions entitles them to the Divine favor; and that thoſe, who differ from them, are devoted to eternal deſtruction. This perſuaſion breaks at once all the ties of ſociety. The toleration of Men who hold

hold erroneous opinions, is conſidered as conniving at their deſtroying not only themſelves, but all others who come within the reach of their influence. This produces that cruel and implacable ſpirit, which has ſo often diſgraced the cauſe of Religion, and diſhonoured Humanity.

Yet the effects of religious controverſy have ſometimes proved beneficial to Mankind. That ſpirit of free enquiry, which incited the firſt Reformers to ſhake off the yoke of eccleſiaſtical tyranny, naturally begot juſt ſentiments of civil liberty, eſpecially when irritated by perſecution. When ſuch ſentiments came to be united with that bold enthuſiaſm, that ſeverity of temper and manners that diſtinguiſhed ſome of the Reformed ſects; they produced thoſe reſolute and inflexible Men, who alone were able to aſſert the cauſe of liberty,

in an age when the Chriſtian world was enervated by luxury or ſuperſtition; and to ſuch Men we owe that freedom, and happy conſtitution, which we at preſent enjoy.—But theſe advantages of religious enthuſiaſm have been but accidental.

In general it would appear, that Religion, conſidered as a ſcience, in the manner it has been uſually treated, is but little benefical to Mankind, neither tending to enlarge the Underſtanding, ſweeten the Temper, or mend the Heart. At the ſame time the labours of ingenious Men, in explaining obſcure and difficult paſſages of Sacred Writ, have been highly uſeful and neceſſary. And though it is natural for Men to carry their ſpeculations, on a ſubject that ſo nearly concerns their preſent and eternal happineſs, farther than Reaſon extends, or than is clearly and expreſsly revealed;

revealed; yet theſe can be followed by no bad conſequences, if they are carried on with that modeſty and reverence which the ſubject requires. They become pernicious only when they are formed into ſyſtems, to which the ſame credit and ſubmiſſion is required, as to Holy Writ itſelf.

We ſhall now proceed to conſider Religion as a rule of life and manners. In this reſpect its influence is very extenſive and beneficial, even when diſfigured by the wildeſt ſuperſtition, as it is able to check and conquer thoſe paſſions, which reaſon and philoſophy are too weak to encounter. But it is much to be regretted, that the application of Religion to this end hath not been attended to with that care which the importance of the ſubject required. —The ſpeculative part of Religion ſeems generally to have engroſſed the attention

attention of Men of Genius. This has been the fate of all the uſeful and practical arts of life, and the application of Religion to the regulation of life and manners muſt be conſidered entirely as a practical art.—The cauſes of this neglect, ſeem to be theſe:—Men of a philoſophical Genius have an averſion to all application, where the active powers of their own Minds are not immediately employed. But in acquiring a practical art, a philoſopher is obliged to ſpend moſt of his time in employments where his Genius and Underſtanding have no exerciſe.—The fate of the practical parts of Medicine and of Religion have been pretty ſimilar. The object of the one is to cure the diſeaſes of the Body; of the other, to cure the diſeaſes of the Mind. The progreſs and degree of perfection of both theſe arts ought to be eſtimated by

by no other ſtandard than their ſucceſs in the cure of the diſeaſes, to which they are ſeverally applied.—In Medicine, the facts on which the art depends, are ſo numerous and complicated, ſo miſrepreſented by fraud, credulity, or heated Imagination, that there has hardly ever been found a truly philoſophical Genius, who has attempted the practical part of it. There are, indeed, many obſtacles of different kinds, which concur to render any improvement in the practice of Phyſic a matter of the utmoſt difficulty, at leaſt while the profeſſion reſts on its preſent narrow foundation. Almoſt all phyſicians who have been Men of ingenuity, have amuſed themſelves in forming theories, which gave exerciſe to their invention, and at the ſame time contributed to their reputation. Inſtead of being at the trouble of making obſervations

obſervations themſelves, they culled out of the promiſcuous multitude already made, ſuch as beſt ſuited their purpoſe, and dreſſed them up in the way their ſyſtem required. In conſequence of this, the hiſtory of Medicine does not ſo much exhibit the hiſtory of a progreſſive art, as a hiſtory of opinions, which prevailed perhaps for twenty or thirty years, and then ſunk into contempt and oblivion.—The caſe has been nearly ſimiliar in practical Divinity. But this is attended with much greater difficulties, than the practical part of Medicine. In this laſt, nothing is required, but aſſiduous and accurate Obſervation, and a good Underſtanding to direct the proper application of ſuch Obſervation. But to cure the diſeaſes of the Mind, there is required that intimate knowledge of the Human Heart, which muſt be drawn from life itſelf,

itſelf, and which books can never teach; of the various diſguiſes, under which vice recommends herſelf to the Imagination; of the artful aſſociation of Ideas, which ſhe forms there; and of the many nameleſs circumſtances that ſoften the Heart and render it acceſſible. It is likewiſe neceſſary to have a knowledge of the arts of inſinuation and perſuaſion, of the art of breaking falſe or unnatural aſſociations of Ideas, or inducing counter aſſociations, and oppoſing one paſſion to another; and after all this knowledge is acquired, the ſucceſsful application of it to practice depends in a conſiderable degree on powers, which no extent of Underſtanding can confer.

Vice does not depend ſo much on a perverſion of the Underſtanding, as of the Imagination and Paſſions, and on habits originally founded on theſe. A vicious

vicious Man is generally ſenſible enough that his conduct is wrong; he knows that vice is contrary both to his duty and to his intereſt, and therefore all laboured reaſoning to ſatisfy his Underſtanding of theſe truths is uſeleſs, becauſe the diſeaſe does not lie in the Underſtanding. The evil is ſeated in the Heart. The Imagination and Paſſions are engaged on its ſide, and to them the cure muſt be applied. Here has been the general defect of writings and ſermons, intended to reform Mankind. Many ingenious and ſenſible remarks are made on the ſeveral duties of Religion, and very judicious arguments are brought to enforce them. Such performances may be attended to with pleaſure, by pious and well-diſpoſed perſons, who likewiſe may derive from thence uſeful inſtruction for their conduct in life. The wicked and profligate,

gate, if ever books of this ſort fall in their way, very readily allow that what they contain are great and eternal truths, but they leave no laſting impreſſion. If any thing can rouſe them, it is the power of lively and pathetic deſcription, which traces and lays open their Hearts through all their windings and diſguiſes, makes them ſee and confeſs their own characters in all their deformity and horror, impreſſes their Hearts, and intereſts their Paſſions by all the motives of love, gratitude, and fear, the proſpect of rewards and puniſhments, and whatever other motives Religion or Nature may dictate. But to do this effectually requires very different powers from thoſe of the Underſtanding. A lively and well-regulated Imagination is eſſentially requiſite.

In public addreſſes to an audience, the great end of reformation is moſt effectually promoted, becauſe all the powers of voice and action, all the arts of eloquence may be brought to give their aſſiſtance. But ſome of thoſe arts depend on gifts of Nature, and cannot be attained by any ſtrength of Genius or Underſtanding. Even where Nature has been liberal of thoſe neceſſary requiſites, they muſt be cultivated by much practice before the proper exerciſe of them can be acquired.—Thus a public ſpeaker may have a voice that is muſical and of great compaſs, but it requires much time and labour to attain its juſt modulation, and that variety of flexion and tone, which a pathetic diſcourſe requires. The ſame difficulty attends the acquiſition of that propriety of action, that power over the expreſſive

expreſſive features of the countenance, particularly of the eyes, ſo neceſſary to command the Hearts and Paſſions of an audience.

It is uſually thought that a preacher, who feels what he is ſaying himſelf, will naturally ſpeak with that tone of voice and expreſſion in his countenance, that beſt ſuits the ſubject, and which cannot fail to move his audience. Thus it is ſaid, a perſon under the influence of fear, anger, or ſorrow, looks and ſpeaks in the manner naturally expreſſive of theſe emotions. This is true in ſome meaſure; but it can never be ſuppoſed, that any preacher will be able to enter into his ſubject with ſuch real warmth upon every occaſion. Beſides, every prudent Man will be afraid to abandon himſelf ſo entirely to any impreſſion, as he muſt do to produce this effect. Moſt Men, when ſtrongly af-

fected by any paſſion or emotion, have ſome peculiarity in their appearance, which does not belong to the natural expreſſion of ſuch an emotion. If this be not properly corrected, a public ſpeaker, who is really warmed and animated with his ſubject, may nevertheleſs make a very ridiculous and contemptible figure.—It is the buſineſs of Art to ſhew Nature in her moſt amiable and graceful forms, and not with thoſe peculiarities in which ſhe appears in particular inſtances; and it is this difficulty of properly repreſenting Nature, that renders the eloquence and action, both of the pulpit and the ſtage, acquiſitions of ſuch difficult attainment.

But beſides thoſe talents inherent in the preacher himſelf, an intimate knowledge of Nature will ſuggeſt the neceſſity of attending to certain external circumſtances, which operate powerfully on

on the Mind, and prepare it for receiving the deſigned impreſſions. Such in particular is the proper regulation of Church Muſic, and the ſolemnity and pomp of public worſhip. Independent of the effect that theſe particulars have on the Imagination, it might be expected that a juſt Taſte, a ſenſe of decency and propriety, would make them more attended to than we find they are. We acknowledge that they have been abuſed, and have occaſioned the groſſeſt ſuperſtition; but this univerſal propenſity to carry them to exceſs, is the ſtrongeſt proof that the attachment to them is deeply rooted in Human Nature, and conſequently, that it is the buſineſs of good ſenſe to regulate, and not vainly to attempt to extinguiſh it. Many religious ſects in their infancy have ſupported themſelves without any of theſe external aſſiſtances; but when

time has abated the fervor of their firſt zeal, we always find that their public worſhip has been conducted with the moſt remarkable coldneſs and inattention, unleſs ſupported by well-regulated ceremonies. In fact it will be found, that thoſe ſects who at their commencement have been moſt diſtinguiſhed for a religious enthuſiaſm that deſpiſed all forms, and the Genius of whoſe tenets could not admit the uſe of any, have either been of ſhort duration, or ended in infidelity.

The many difficulties that attend the practical art of making Religion influence the manners and lives of Mankind, by acquiring a command over the Imagination and Paſſions, have made it too generally neglected, even by the moſt eminent of the Clergy for learning and good ſenſe. Theſe have rather choſen to confine themſelves to a

tract, where they were ſure to excel by the force of their own Genius, than to attempt a road where their ſucceſs was doubtful, and where they might be outſhone by Men greatly their inferiors. It has therefore been principally cultivated by Men of lively Imaginations, poſſeſſed of ſome natural advantages of voice and manner. But as no art can ever become very beneficial to Mankind, unleſs it be under the direction of Genius and good ſenſe, it has too often happened, that the art we are now ſpeaking of has become ſubſervient to the wildeſt fanaticiſm, ſometimes to the gratification of vanity, and ſometimes to ſtill more unworthy purpoſes.

The third view of Religion conſiders it as engaging and intereſting the affections, and comprehends the devotional or ſentimental part of it.—The devo-

tional ſpirit is in ſome meaſure conſtitutional, depending on livelineſs of Imagination and ſenſibility of Heart, and, like theſe qualities, prevails more in warmer climates than it does in ours. What ſhews its great dependence on the Imagination, is the remarkable attachment it has to Poetry and Muſic, which Shakeſpear calls the Food of Love, and which may with equal truth be called the Food of Devotion. Muſic enters into the future Paradiſe of the devout of every ſect and of every country. The Deity, viewed by the eye of cool Reaſon, may be ſaid with great propriety to dwell in light inacceſſible. The Mind, ſtruck with the immenſity of his being, and with a ſenſe of its own littleneſs and unworthineſs, admires with that diſtant awe and veneration that almoſt excludes love. But viewed by a devout Imagination, he

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may become an object of the warmeſt affection, and even paſſion.—The philoſopher contemplates the Deity in all thoſe marks of wiſdom and benignity diffuſed through the various works of Nature. The devout Man confines his views rather to his own particular connection with the Deity, the many inſtances of his goodneſs he himſelf has experienced, and the many greater he ſtill hopes for. This eſtabliſhes a kind of intercourſe, which often intereſts the Heart and Paſſions in the deepeſt manner.

The devotional Taſte, like all other Taſtes, has had the hard fate to be condemned as a weakneſs, by all who are ſtrangers to its joys and its influence. Too much, and too frequent occaſion has been given to turn this ſubject into ridicule.—A heated and devout Imagination, when not under

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the direction of a very ſound Underſtanding, is apt to run very wild, and is at the ſame time impatient to publiſh all its follies to the world.—The feelings of a devout Heart ſhould be mentioned with great reſerve and delicacy, as they depend upon private experience, and certain circumſtances of Mind and ſituation, which the world can neither know nor judge of. But devotional writings, executed with Judgment and Taſte, are not only highly uſeful, but to all, who have a true ſenſe of Religion, peculiarly engaging.

The devotional ſpirit, united to good ſenſe and a chearful temper, gives that ſteadineſs to virtue, which it always wants, when produced and ſupported by good natural diſpoſitions only. It corrects and humanizes thoſe conſtitutional vices, which it is not able entirely to ſubdue, and though it too often

often fails to render Men perfectly virtuous, it preſerves them from becoming utterly abandoned. It has beſides the moſt favorable influence on all the paſſive virtues; it gives a ſoftneſs and ſenſibility to the Heart, and a mildneſs and gentleneſs to the Manners; but above all, it produces an univerſal charity and love to Mankind, however different in Station, Country, or Religion. There is a ſublime yet tender melancholy, almoſt the univerſal attendant on Genius, which is too apt to degenerate into gloom and diſguſt with the world. Devotion is admirably calculated to ſooth this diſpoſition, by inſenſibly leading the Mind, while it ſeems to indulge it, to thoſe proſpects which calm every murmer of diſcontent, and diffuſe a chearfulneſs over the darkeſt hours of Human Life.—Perſons in the pride of high health and ſpirits, who are keen

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in the purſuits of pleaſure, intereſt, or ambition, have either no ideas on this ſubject, or treat it as the enthuſiaſm of a weak Mind. But this really ſhews great narrowneſs of Underſtanding; a very little reflection and acquaintance with Nature might teach them, on how precarious a foundation their boaſted independence on Religion is built; the thouſand nameleſs accidents that may deſtroy it; and that though for ſome years they ſhould eſcape theſe, yet that time muſt impair the greateſt vigour of health and ſpirits, and deprive them of all thoſe objects for which at preſent they think life only worth enjoying.—It ſhould ſeem therefore very neceſſary to ſecure ſome permanent object, ſome real ſupport to the Mind, to chear the ſoul when all others ſhall have loſt their influence.—The greateſt inconvenience, indeed, that attends devotion, is its taking

taking ſuch a faſt hold of the affections, as ſometimes threatens the extinguiſhing of every other active principle of the Mind. For when the devotional ſpirit falls in with a melancholy temper, it is too apt to depreſs the Mind entirely, to ſink it to the weakeſt ſuperſtition, and to produce a total retirement and abſtraction from the world, and all the duties of life.

I ſhall now conclude theſe looſe obſervations on the advantages ariſing to Mankind from thoſe faculties, which diſtinguiſh them from the reſt of the Animal World; advantages which do not ſeem correſpondent to what might be reaſonably expected from a proper exertion of theſe faculties, particularly among the few who have the higheſt intellectual abilities, and full leiſure to improve them. The capital error ſeems to conſiſt in ſuch Men's confining their attention

attention chiefly to enquiries that are either of little importance, or the materials of which lie in their own Minds. —The bulk of Mankind are made to act, not to reaſon, for which they have neither abilities nor leiſure. They who poſſeſs that deep, clear, and comprehenſive Underſtanding which conſtitutes a truly philoſophical Genius, ſeem born to an aſcendency and empire over the Minds and affairs of Mankind, if they would but aſſume it. It cannot be expected, that they ſhould poſſeſs all thoſe powers and talents, which are requiſite in the ſeveral uſeful and elegant arts of life, but it is they alone who are fitted to direct and regulate their application.

FINIS.

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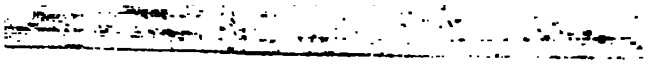
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